

THE COMMONWEAL

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and Public Affairs.*

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THE CENTENNIAL GENERATION

OUTLINING the drift of current literature must remain mere bubble-blowing in a day when, as Mr. Lincoln MacVeagh says elsewhere in this issue of *The Commonwealth*, the writer confronts his sole patron in a "public." This cloudy being may be divided into halves and quarters after a fashion, but the groups overlap so constantly that attributing definite individuality to each is futile. Most of the new "book clubs" do specialize in their own type of publication, and something of a case might be made out for racial preferences. Nevertheless the hope of supplying what most individuals will want is the writer's supreme goal. Poetry seems, therefore, to be emphasizing the popular element of rhythm, as used in the eminently successful John Brown's *Body*, rather than the more fastidious element of imagery. In prose the vogue of the biography continues, nor does it appear that "snappy styles" are indispensable to its outfitting. Adventure and mystery have again fallen heirs to impressive chunks of advertising space, which may (or may not) indicate a degree of tiredness with "literature" in its more lofty forms. Possibly the effort to uplift which characterized a decade or more of hard-fisted criticism is subsiding to make room for something more like the placid and comfortable purring of automobiles. Yet even this generalization is

far too ambitious to merit serious championing. How shall one account for the increasing prosperity of authors who write for very studious folk?

Possibly a little of interest can be learned from a glance backward toward writers whose memories have been enshrined this year in what may be termed the centennial halo. In so far as English literature is concerned, Meredith and Rossetti were born in 1828. They have at least this in common, that their lives were devoted to the development of a fastidious, craftsmanlike attitude toward creative writing. Meredith was fated to become the highbrow's favorite novelist; Rossetti came near to demanding an aesthetic initiation of his would-be readers. Though both had disciples, neither cut a great figure on the real cricket fields of English letters. Their influence must be sought for in the refinement of dictional and artistic standards which they—both outsiders—proposed to a nation used to beef-and-ale prose. To a relatively large extent this veering toward art may be said to constitute the true originality of the epoch which followed the passing of Dickens and Thackeray. What it lacked in virility it may have gained in fineness. At any rate, Diana and the Blessed Damozel abide as the most representative daguerreotypes of that age.

By comparison, the decade intervening between 1820

and 1830 supplied American literature with few significant birth records. Trowbridge and Bayard Taylor were its most important products; and of neither can it be said that he ever fails to bore the contemporary reader. Possibly enough, the best minds issuing out of these strangely sterile ten years were so completely swept into the maelstrom of the Civil War that their energy was diverted from literature. At any rate it is singular that they lie between the years which begot the great luminaries of the "golden age"—Hawthorne, Emerson and the rest—and the years which meant so much to our literature after 1870. But the circumstance that devotees to craftsmanship did not spring up here as they did in England calls one's attention to the fact that, comparatively speaking, the issue of art in literature has been taken far more seriously in America. Our really great innovations have been effected with an eye to it. Poe's conception of "style" is a far more thorough-going and formalistic thing than Tennyson's or even Keats's. No recent novelist is so utterly symbolic of technical mastery as Henry James. Even the less successful New Englanders—Curtis, Stoddard and the rest—were like Hawthorne in this, that they would rather have died than have written badly.

The zest for delicacy, often set down as an American trait, invites explanation on the basis of several theories. Perhaps we are an "old" people rather than a young one. Possibly the celebrated Puritan conscience is in the background. Or it may be that, face to face with a vast, crude continent, we have satisfied an elementary need for refinement through recourse to the arts. During recent years, despite a genuine tendency to devour too much aesthetic, prominent critics have berated this "restraint" by alluding over and over again to the magnificent possibilities latent in the American landscape. Most of them believed realism would suffice, apparently forgetful of the circumstance that realism (witness Fielding or Rabelais) was the product of men busy trying to do something else. In a measure their insistence upon passion and prowess was right, because it was human. The United States is not all chilly starlight. But for some reason or other the chief result of this crusade for virility has been a growth of interest in the European masters. The year 1928 has enthroned the shadowy symbolism of Eugene O'Neill, the wraith-like sentences of Thornton Wilder and the highly formalized art of Edith Wharton. Mr. Robinson, the Misses Millay and Reese—nobody will deny that these are our "foremost" poets. So complete has been the veering away from the goals pointed out by strident criticism that even the Literary Guild has sponsored the romantic prose of Wyndham Lewis.

Surely the great reason why a literature in the modern realistic temper has not succeeded here is the absence of anything like a burning desire to revamp social living. The nation is too content with the status quo to focus its attention upon concrete rebellions, of

the same sort which have vitalized European literature from Zola to Franz Werfel. This probably means that we are happier—or at least more contented—than Europe, but it also means that we are less aware of the abiding tragic and comic principles. The meaning of life and death is obscured by the bill-boards which advertise the significance of prosperity. So individualistic have our conceptions of sorrow and farce become that epic narrative seldom envisages a group larger than the family. Even here, as in Mrs. Wharton's *The Children*, the tempo is that of moral criticism, and the sharp edge of satire flays the stupidity of man. All of us are, to some extent, appalled (or at least worried) by the decay of ethical fibre, but we are driven to reflect upon remedies rather than upon the elemental misery of the race, or upon the possibility of its ultimate transcendent redemption.

It is easy enough to see that the atmosphere is not favorable to distinctly Catholic writing. The reason is not so much a dearth of artistic talent, or of a reading public invested with enthusiasm. Far more fundamental is the fact that the Catholic sense is always a corporate sense. Living according to the Faith may deepen and strengthen the individual, but its primary and most normal effect is welding men together in Christ's kingdom. We may say without hesitation that Catholics will not only agree upon certain fundamental teachings, but that they will also "feel" a common bond which is like nothing else in the world. The ideal must always be to express and cement this solidarity—a purpose which the rampant fractionizing of the time renders vastly difficult. Yet we are being armed today with new weapons. A deepened sense of liturgical union has been awakened in many. The corporate tasks of Christendom have been reemphasized. Church unity efforts have restored the vision of one fold.

Meanwhile there is room for the Catholic as an analyst of morals, an exponent of lyric ecstasy, or a critic of what the rest of the world is doing. Much in the current output reinforces the comparatively optimistic opinion that a fresh and more careful "reasonableness" has entered American letters. There is an abundance of sound and illuminating research. Flashes of poetic fire irradiate the landscape, reminding one of the deeps between which human nature stretches the tremendous span of its destiny. For these one may be grateful, even while keeping a hope for more illustrious things alive in the heart. The interested attention which thousands are giving to literature testifies to the existence of deeply-rooted intellectual and spiritual desires, to the satisfaction of which books are expected to contribute. Though books are never the same thing as faith, or perhaps even a frequent preliminary to it, one does not doubt that the mission of the Church—to enlighten all, particularly those who sit in the darkness of evil or need—must, in our time, be carried out partly through the medium of writing.

THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

REPARATIONS and war debts make up the thorniest of existing political problems. But since it is futile to hope for better relations between France and Germany until the tangle has somehow been straightened out, British statesmen have taken something like an initiative in suggesting definitive talk. The plan devised so far is—to devise a plan. Mr. S. Parker Gilbert believes, and most guardians of exchequers agree with him, that an international committee of experts must be employed for the purpose. Of course the method finally selected will not differ in any important respect from the suggestions already put forward by influential bankers that the United States agree to a discount of Allied debts by the sale of German securities. If Washington assented to this idea and encouraged the sale of the bonds, the whole situation would be materially improved. There remain, of course, the French and Belgian reconstruction bills, which must somehow be paid but which, for the sake of peace, ought to be taken out of the realm of international affairs. It seems to us imperative that United States coöperation be given without reserve. By exercising something akin to generosity, the administration which goes into office next March might win new and practical support for the ideals incorporated in the Kellogg treaty.

COMPARATIVELY little is said publicly about the International Labor Organization, which functions in Geneva under the tutelage of the League of Nations. It is nevertheless a very active and fruitful establish-

ment, with several noteworthy triumphs to its credit. A recent number of the Information Service published regularly by the Federal Council of Churches outlines all this succinctly, so that there is good reason for commenting upon it here. Most of the work is done through the International Labor Office, the constitution and powers of which are outlined in the League Covenant. Here representatives of the governments, industries and workers of the several member countries develop plans for industrial coöperation, which are then referred to the national authorities concerned for appropriate action. So far the Office has devoted its energies primarily to research and publication, with excellent results. Thanks to it the world knows—or at least is in a position to know—its economic condition at a given moment almost as accurately as a patient can keep track of his health by employing a trained nurse. The practical results accruing from such work have been, singularly enough, most noticeable in the Orient. The Office's success in putting an end to horrible conditions prevailing in the Persian rug industry, where children were deformed by years of grinding toil, is one of the brightest stories in all the history of international relations. If nothing else had been accomplished by the League of Nations, this one thing would make the world its debtor.

DR. HUBERT WORK, who is tired of hearing of oil leases, provides a curious example of the apathy with which government scandal and corruption are being regarded in these prosperous states. It will be recalled that as Secretary of the Interior, Dr. Work last spring renewed the Salt Creek lease which the Sinclair company had previously obtained from Mr. Fall. Attorney-General Sargent has now declared the original lease and renewal invalid. Were times hard, one could not imagine a man in Dr. Work's position turning away from the decision of the Attorney-General with the comment, "Those things are past. We are tired of hearing of oil leases." In fact, it is almost incredible that he should do so now. The ordinary citizen, content in the enjoyment of an unusually high standard of living, might be pardoned for making a similar reflection, for after all, the affair is not immediately affecting the size of his larder. But Dr. Work is not an ordinary citizen. He figures prominently in the story of the oil lease. And while there is not the least reflection on his character in that story, there is a very sad one on his attitude toward its aftermath. His customary vigor of expression seems to have deserted him at a very unfortunate time.

THE "great dry experiment," which various people are so anxious to rescue, does not appear to face half so much peril as we personally might wish for it. There are moments when the folly of the whole undertaking, not to speak of its narrowness, makes one long for a dozen Aristophaneses and Ben Jonsons. But the modern world is said to be interested more

in facts than in jibes. If this be true, the recent report issued by the Department of Trade and Commerce, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, regarding the amount of alcoholic liquor exported from Canada during the past two years, should prove to be reading with a punch. During the twelve months ended August, 1928, \$27,530,174 worth of liquors were dispatched to foreign shores—an increase of more than \$800,000 over the total of the year preceding. Of this amount nearly 80 percent went to the United States, which country is also responsible for the whole increase over 1927. Three and a half million gallons of beer went over the border during the twelve months recorded, and the sum total of the whisky we “acquired” was 4,614,840 quarts. Unfortunately the beer supply has fallen off, while the ingress of spirits has grown tremendously. The amount paid to Canada for grain products, one of her most important exports, was a million and a half dollars less than the sum paid for booze! And of course these figures say nothing about the quantities consumed by United States tourists, millions of whom sought out some Canadian oasis during the past season.

IF CANADIAN statistics make talk of a “dry America” sound ridiculous, the will of the Australian people comes upon the scene as a kind of resounding chorus. A nation-wide referendum on prohibition ended, according to the Sydney Morning Herald of September 4, in a majority of nearly half a million against dry laws. The “wets” polled more than two-thirds of the total vote cast, even in districts wherein local or district prohibition had been in effect for years. In commenting upon the event, the Morning Herald declared: “The industrial communities were especially emphatic in rejecting it; and their vote may be taken as resentment against the attempt of the prohibitionists to deprive the working man of the only club where, generally, he can meet his fellows and offer hospitality.” It is worthy of note, however, that Australia’s citizenry is unusually homogeneous. There is no “foreign element,” no “racial addiction to drink.” The only alibi which the prohibition sponsors could offer is suggested by the following remark made by the Reverend R. B. S. Hammond, one of the leading promoters of drought: “Those silly people who voted yesterday against prohibition will, I am certain, live to regret it.” Perhaps that was only his way of agreeing with the poet that ’tis sometimes folly to be wise.

IF THE present campaign is one of the “dirtiest” in history, it is probably because people wish to have it so. Old world governments have been criticized because their subjects lavished too much praise and respect upon the sovereigns. Ours can be described as one which exposes its supreme officers to deluges of abuse. Even the attendants are far from immune. The number of scurrilous post-cards and profane letters which the mails have carried since last summer

constitutes, if one can presume to bundle them all under one head, the most gigantic case of public blackmail on record. Curiously enough the missiles hurled at Governor Smith are mostly “institutional” in character. He is Catholic, Tammanyite, non-collegiate. Hurl an epithet at any of these and you hit the Governor—and of course it is easier to defend one’s own personal record, covering a paltry few years, than to clarify the course of history and explain the nature of the human race. Mr. Hoover, for his part, has been the target of diverse personal rancors. He is too prosaic or too poetic; too autocratic or too easily swayed. Above all, he has lived abroad, engaged in the noxious business of feeding children. The recent charge that he once applied for British citizenship was the last straw. It proves how efficient is the army of nauseating gumshoe men who trail a candidate and build a rumor out of somebody else’s hint. If the angels have not all fled the country during the past few months, they must sometimes put their heads together and wonder what the reasons are which could induce any worthy man to care about governing so scurvy a mob as this electorate.

ONE rather ugly result of the excitement attending the great air flights of the past two years has been the opening up of a new market to the salesmen of insecure stocks. The public is receptive these days to talk of aviation profits, and the ancient instinct to take a chance is being indulged to an extent which alarms Mr. William MacCracken, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce in charge of aeronautics. Recently he told the Better Business Bureau that “airplane factories are operating in a seller’s market. Most factories are three to six months behind in orders. This condition is bound to change and with the end of the seller’s market, we will have real price competition. This will have a serious effect on many aircraft investments.” It was only to be expected, of course, that wild promotion would invade an industry so congenial to exploitation as plane manufacture. A factory can be started with comparatively little money and it must be as a result of this that we already have twice as many airplane as automobile factories in the United States. Under such conditions it is not the easiest task in the world to tell the difference between a wise and a foolhardy investment, and Mr. MacCracken’s warning to move cautiously is a timely one.

IN DISCUSSING the work of Father Jouny of the Friendly Islands, Fides Service recently disclosed one of the most interesting missionary stories of modern times. Almost incredible deeds have been performed by this priest, whom years of teaching in a French theological seminary had hardly prepared for his later career. After beginning his mission work as private chaplain to the native queen of Wallis Island, he took up his apostolate on the tiny islet of Nia Foou, a speck of land that cannot be found on any except very large

maps. Rebuffed by the inhabitants, he sought refuge high up the crater of a volcano, built a hut there and, like Robinson Crusoe, ventured abroad each day to find the means of subsistence. This was forty-two years ago. Little by little he has won the tolerance, then the friendship of the islanders, and converted one-half of them to the Faith. Meanwhile Nia Foou has been growing to such comparative importance that mail steamers visit it occasionally, but despite this awareness of its existence, it has remained a kingdom. Father Jouny, at eighty-one, has the satisfaction both of enjoying the veneration of the entire island population, and of knowing that his people are unspoiled by the advance of civilization.

THE annual conventions of the National Council of Catholic Women are always interesting testimonials to a spirit of readiness to serve civil and spiritual society. For a number of years the meetings have striven to make the Washington School of Social Service the expression of Catholic desire to aid in the betterment of modern conditions. This year, at Cleveland, new contributions totaling \$68,000 were announced, most of which will be used for the upkeep of scholarships. In order to impress upon all the importance of the venture, Monsignor James Hugh Ryan, president of the Catholic University, delivered an earnest address on the subject. We may add that the Service School is now its own best recommendation. Graduates have entered various kinds of relief work, proving their fitness and the worth of their ideals. Nothing could be more gratifying or more necessary. That the National Council has further purposes and concerns goes without saying. Most of these are embodied in the series of resolutions passed at the convention—resolutions which show how wide the scope of a modern woman's thinking has become, and of how many responsibilities and progressive ideals she must be conscious.

ECHOES of the traffic complaints of New York and Chicago are resounding from almost every large city in the land. The problem which had seemed so remote to the man accustomed to using his own automobile only in the evenings, comes much too close for comfort when he discovers that half or more of his taxi-fare is being consumed in waiting for the signal lights, or in circling about to find one-way streets leading in the desired direction. The man who must use his car in the city has long ago given up the hope of eliminating a goodly walk between the parking-ground and his destination. It is becoming more obvious every day that the solution of both problems cannot be long deferred if we are to save any of the advantages originally accruing from the use of the automobile in town. As a partial remedy, Paris is planning to establish a series of understreet garages at strategic points, but those who are awaiting the results of this experiment may have a very long wait. No one knows, for

instance, what became of the plan announced two years ago for eliminating the truly horrible noises of the French motor horns by substituting some sweeter-voiced instrument. American cities cannot afford to be idle while the answer to the traffic question is being slowly composed elsewhere. They must attack this most vexing situation with vigor and originality—and must attack it at once.

THE seven-year-old King of Roumania must go to school, as though he were an ordinary youngster who had never reviewed soldiers of flesh and blood. This by decision of Princess Helen, who is determined that her son shall not be pampered by private tutors. No favors will be his; he will be expected to know his lessons as thoroughly as his classmates, who, by the way, are to be representative of all classes of Roumanian society. To this end, each province will send a pupil to the school selected, and there will be children of Hungarian, German, Jewish and the other minority races as well as Roumanians. Michael will thus come into intimate contact with the people whom he is to rule. If, in the end, he does not rule wisely, it will be because of the human element which enters often to spoil the best of plans and seldom to improve one. At least he is sure to start with an advantage which few hereditary monarchs have had, probably because Princess Helen realizes that a spoiled child has not much reason for remembering his mother with gratitude. A lucky lad, although he must consider himself most unfortunate just now, resenting like any normal boy of his age the onus of the schoolroom.

THE agitation in favor of establishing a Gaelic Room in the New York Public Library is not a new one and one remembers that it is now some twenty years since President Theodore Roosevelt recommended the widespread perpetuation and popularization of Gaelic culture on the part of the Irish Americans of the United States. As time has gone on and the demand for some definite action along the line of this foundation has spread and grown among the Irish historical societies and the allied groups of lovers of Gaelic poetry and prose, it seems that the day has arrived when a formal expression of this racial and cultural consciousness should take formal shape. In 1897, Mr. Jacob H. Schiff donated \$10,000 for the purchase of Jewish literature on condition that a special room be set apart for it and a competent librarian be employed. Since the formation of this Jewish library, a great collection has been gathered, representing Jewish activities in learning and enterprise, ancient and modern, throughout the world and the usefulness of this foundation has been clearly demonstrated through three decades. The existence of this room in the New York Public Library is a fine proof and demonstration of Jewish devotion to their racial culture and an example, we may add, that the sons of the Gael would do very well to follow.

THE Irish and Scottish Gaels who are keenly interested to demonstrate to the world that, as A. E. (George Russell) recently declared: "If there is anything in nationality at all, its essence is preserved in the literature and language of a people," are powerful and intelligent enough to establish a Gaelic library that would add to the cultural and constantly extending influences of New York. Since the Celtic renaissance of Yeats, Lady Gregory, Synge, Padraic Colum and others, the average American reader needs no argument to convince himself of the invaluable character of ancient and modern Gaelic thought. We have passed through a period of worship of older personages like Thomas Moore, whose statue decorates so many American parks; the Irish figures of Daniel O'Connor, Parnell and other statesmen have had their honors; it remains for the body of Irish and Scottish culture to be recognized in a special place and in a special manner, such as this Gaelic Room in the New York Public Library would provide.

THE Catholic Medical Mission Board which is the national organization for promoting medical mission activities throughout the world, has very appropriately chosen the feast of Saint Luke, October 18, as Medical Mission day. One of the most interesting results of what has been called the higher criticism of the Bible at the beginning of the twentieth century was the restudy by Professor Harnack of Berlin of all the sources of the traditions with regard to Saint Luke's having been a physician. Considerable doubt had been thrown on that by the higher critics toward the end of the nineteenth century, but Harnack found complete confirmation of the historical claim that Luke was a physician in the succession of Greek medical scholars between Hypocrates and Galen.

NOT at all remarkable, therefore, is the circumstance that doctor and apostle have always gone hand in hand since early Christian days. Caring for the sick was not so much a plea for the Faith as a sign of its beneficent effect. Today, when the advance of medical science has made it possible to alleviate much suffering which was formerly unavoidable, it is more desirable than ever that the establishment of a mission in the foreign field should also mean the tireless performance of one among the supreme corporal works of mercy. So far Catholic missions have not been able to muster sufficient funds and personnel for the purpose. The Medical Mission Board itself is only a few years old, but has accomplished enough to justify faith in its ambitions and confidence in its abilities. It, too, is a possible object for deeds of charity, either monetary or spiritual, which all of us have it in our power to bestow. Every doctor or nurse sent into places where health conditions are primitive can be the dispenser of thousands of those cups of cold water upon which, the Saviour assured us, a blessing should rest forevermore.

THE POP BOTTLE INSTINCT

MR. GEORGE HERMAN RUTH had just made his third home run and the spirit of St. Louis was violently agitated. The cheers which ordinarily greet this eminent American's prowess at the bat were painfully absent. Instead there were groans, catcalls, and, from one section of the bleachers, a shower of pop bottles. For a hero can be too heroic, and the law of diminishing returns will operate on the baseball field as at the banquet table. The pop bottle is the noble instrument of our salvation from the mighty.

Although the device is indigenous, the impulse which drives it is not confined entirely to our shores. While Mr. John Hennessey, of Indianapolis, was sailing through the early rounds of the last Wimbledon tournament, no fault being apparent in his tennis, someone criticized his pants. A few years ago, when the franc was at its lowest, some of the harum-scarum elements of Paris resented the easy superiority of the dollar by jeering at American tourist cars. Soon it became a game, in which the tourists themselves would join, when afoot, everyone forgetting the cause in the joy of ridicule.

Nor does the impulse restrict itself to annoying successful athletes and wealthy travelers. It is responsible for some of the most amusing episodes in history, beginning with Aristides; and it contributes much to the excitement of the political campaign now under way in these United States. In fact the status quo can be described in the very terms made familiar by the critiques which follow every important sports event. Mr. Borah is being helped back into the ring by the publicity committee; Mr. Raskob has been given the benefit of a long count; Dr. Moses's home run was a foul, and Mr. Robinson has been allowed four strikes.

As long as Mr. Smith was simply the Governor of New York, and the unofficial leader of the forces opposed to prohibition, he was idolized by the wets, and respected, at least, by the dries. In his speech accepting the nomination for President, he repeated a stand that he had taken long before. But he was now the nominee of a great party, and as such was promptly adjudged not wet enough on the one hand, and a danger to our moral fabric on the other. When he appointed Mr. Raskob, he was fawning on big business. When he stood for government control of water power at Denver, he was threatening our economic stability. Where he had been accepted as an honest, able and upright man in April, he was a traitor and a double-dealer in August. The Happy Warrior had become too happy. There was a rush for the pop bottles.

When, in his speech at Newark, Mr. Hoover used statistics to show that the American workingman is the highest paid in the world, he could hardly have suspected that he was making himself an inviting target. His method of allowing figures to tell the story had heretofore been held against him. But now it was

discovered that he is only an automaton, helpful, even admirable, in a subordinate capacity, but no more to be accepted as a leader than one of Rossum's Universal Robots. Ordinary humanity has been denied him, and it has even been hinted that he is not above experimenting with the masses in order to test his economic theories. He is no longer a man who enjoys his work; he is a machine in a double-breasted blue serge suit.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Hoover know very well what they are up against. Mr. Hoover from the first has paid no attention to it. Mr. Smith, probably because he has suffered from it so much more than his opponent, fought back in the beginning of the campaign, but has since decided, apparently, to ignore it. Both realize that the man who wins must make that last catch in a blinding shower of cushions and programs.

All this, as in baseball or boxing, is truly a part of the game. Silly to deplore it; we should miss it very much if it were to disappear. The spice would be gone from politics, and it would become an anaemic substitute for the real thing, like Sunday football, near beer, vegetable steak, coffee minus caffeine, and tobacco without nicotine. The aversion of most persons to these things may be no more than caprice, but capriciousness is the kick, the drug, the flying tackle, that makes life interesting, if short.

TWO SIDES OF A BORDER

ONE result of continued talk about Mexico has been increased knowledge of what the United States government has actually done to and for that nation. To an overwhelming extent, public opinion in this country has heretofore been guided by two influences: first, the propaganda instituted by the Mexican "revolution" itself, which has been aided by an adroit system of censorship and by a well-paid corps of agents; second, the speeches of President Wilson, who believed that "liberty and democracy" were being established by the followers of Madero, and who therefore pledged the good offices of his country to the advancement of this illustrious cause. Everybody familiar with Mexican conditions has long since known that Mr. Wilson was badly fooled. But public opinion has not accepted this conclusion, because the war strengthened opposition to imperialistic tendencies with which oil and land-holding interests are usually identified, and because the religious issue, created by President Calles, became very important.

People were either afraid that Catholics would force Washington to "intervene" on behalf of the Church, or glad that priests and nuns were getting the worst of it. As a consequence even the most elementary information regarding events in Mexico was excluded from newspaper discussion. More recently, however, there have been several "breaks" in the wall of silence, the old fears are growing tepid, and the expectations raised by Ambassador Morrow have given way to anxious question marks. None of the "breaks" re-

ferred to seem to us so important as the publication by the Outlook of six articles on Mexican affairs by a man who calls himself Marcelo Villegas. One must note, however, several others: articles scattered through the periodicals, and very especially a little book, *Mexico*, which the University of Chicago has published.

To return to the Outlook articles, one must express gratitude for their able presentation of facts which cannot be excluded from intelligent discussion of the subject and which have, nevertheless, been utterly ignored. These several papers hardly concern themselves with advocating a solution or proposing a point of view; they are bundles of evidence, alarming to the man whose mind has been made up in advance. Villegas makes two points. The first is that the uprising which developed into the "revolution" through the presidencies of Madero, Obregon, Calles and the rest was directly associated with the American I. W. W. movement and was abetted by groups resident in the United States. Its instigators may have possessed just cause for grievance, but they adopted the fatal policy of "direct action," which has meant revolutionary overthrow of government and with that the abandonment of order, the spread of lawlessness and the devastation of the country. Thus the United States government, in so far as it aided the revolutionary movement, was supporting a form of political activity which it would stamp out ruthlessly at home.

Such support President Wilson did lend, and none of his successors in the presidential office have been able to get rid of the effects of his policy. Villegas succeeds in proving that Wilson insisted upon giving to Mexico a government which he did not understand, which the Mexicans themselves did not want, and which in the long run would undermine entirely the diplomatic influence of the United States. To us of the present, the events which followed the decisions of 1913 seem tragically farcical, reminding one of nothing so much as the efforts of a professor to direct a game of football which he has never witnessed and which he believes ought to be conducted according to the code of afternoon teas. The two means of influence—recognition and imposition of an embargo on arms—were used triumphantly in preventing the Mexican people from managing their own affairs, and in making life impossible for ambassadors to Mexico City. This is Villegas's second point; and, regardless of whether you believe he has made it or not, you cannot afford to leave his evidence unread.

Mexico is so obviously the most serious problem in our foreign relations that the State Department might well afford to concentrate all its attention upon it, leaving the rest of the world free to care for itself. Unfortunately the Department is not free or in a position to interpret the attitude of the public. The current attitude of silence may be disturbed, but it is still considered the proper thing by the great majority. One hopes the Villegas articles will be very widely read.

THE PUBLISHER LOOKS AT LITERATURE

By LINCOLN MACVEAGH

THE Publisher looked up from his desk, where he was trying to figure out how to sell the greatest number of books in the smallest possible time.

"A publisher looking at literature," he said, "is like a man lost in the forest who finds himself unable to see it for the underbrush. The publisher sees books, proofs, manuscripts, authors, advertisements and sales. Literature may be all about him, but to make any kind of headway through the tangle of competition, he must cultivate a kind of short-sightedness which unfits him to observe tree-tops which strike the stars.

"Once in a while, of course, as he gropes his way along looking for the trees he knows are there, he may bump up against a big one, and then if he is like most publishers, he will clasp it in his arms, mingling surprise and pride in a delighted cry of 'Mine!' It is really like a kind of blind-man's-buff. Though, of course, the publisher sees very clearly as far as he does see—as far as his nose. He is worthy of his hire.

"Primarily a publisher is a business man, though his business happens to be in books. Whether the books do or do not contain literature is not the question; what he seeks, and what the author asks of him is sales. Only rarely have I heard of an author who cared a straw for the personal appreciation of his publisher. The royalty checks and the advertising appropriation are what count in the author's estimate of the publisher—and the publisher is not slow to return the compliment. A short time ago a publishing friend of mine was talking with me about literature, when I ventured to say of one of his authors—thinking he would understand—that, after all, so-and-so didn't count for much as a writer. My friend turned to me in indignation: 'Why, he sells 30,000 regularly!' And this publisher is a cultivated man as publishers go. I have been asked, as a publisher, to look at literature. But a publisher can't look at literature, however much he may look for it. His training, every day intensified, is all against his seeing it, though it were offered to him, labeled, on a platter.

"'Get out of your head,' said a publisher the other day to a youthful applicant for an editorial position—the place was a university club which passes with the vulgar for a home of culture—'Get out of your head that publishing has anything to do with literature. It hasn't. You will be nearer literature at home than in the office.' And he went on to outline the things which really make publishing attractive to publishers—very different things from what the young man fresh from his college 'Lit.' invariably imagines. I know of no publisher of any length or degree of servitude who is not in love with his calling. But he does not love it because it deals with literature.

"Publishing combines the attractive features of both business and profession. It is, in its essence, a promoter's business. It provides a gamble a minute. For the man of an active turn of mind it offers unusually varied contacts, professionally with authors on the one hand, and commercially with booksellers on the other. Every new book brings up new problems, and of the making of books there is no end.

"Publishing also is a form of service. Its service to the publisher himself is obvious. Some publishers like the publicity the game affords; others the contacts and other features I have already outlined; others again are in the business simply for a living; and most combine these points of view in various proportions and degrees. Most publishers think of publishing as a rather noble business as businesses go—publishing truth, you know, and banishing darkness and error. To the public at large the publisher purveys information (without always inquiring into its truth) and recreation (generally of the purer sort). He serves the purpose also of acquainting the public with some good literature along with a great deal of bad. What service he renders literature itself, however, is another question.

"Distribution seems to be his one service in this connection, and I am of the perhaps heretical opinion that this is no service at all to literature per se; that, in fact, it would be far better for literature if no publishers existed. If this be treason make the most of it. But I imagine it is more fanciful than seditious. For unless some Mussolini arises to save us from the tyranny of a 'free' press, there is no likelihood of the publisher disappearing. He is here to stay, as literature is here to stay, though for very different reasons. Literature is a spontaneous activity of man. It is its own justification and cannot be legislated out of existence, while publishing is an activity which has but a short history and no excuse save as a means to an end. But can anyone say that more and better publishing means more and better literature? I think not. More, undoubtedly, but better, hardly.

"It may be argued that the publisher is of service to literature in sustaining the life of the author, and making literature possible—in fact that he takes the place of the old-time patron. Whereas Herodotus found his patron in the Athenian state, Vergil in the emperor, Ennius in Cato, Lucretius in Memmius, Horace in Maecenas, and so on, in the days before publishers were thought of, now the indigent author finds his patron in his publisher. And if this were really so, the publisher might well be proud. Doubleday, Scribner, Knopf—each publisher his own Maecenas! But unfortunately the analogy is false. The author lives off the public, not off the publisher,

who does but introduce the two to each other, for a consideration. The real patron is the public, and the value of the publisher's service to literature must therefore be measured by the value to literature of this new patron, a value I estimate to be nil or less.

"I do not intend to begin here a discussion of the aristocratic versus the democratic theory of art. But as a publisher, forced to observe the outpouring stream of books season by season and year by year, I may be allowed to state a conclusion. There can be no doubt but that talent, if not genius, is ruined every day by the combination of public and publisher. I am thinking now of a certain biographer who scored a 'hit.' Patron Public demanded, and got through Mr. Publisher, several would-be repetitions of this 'success' within the year. I think too of a certain historian who has prostituted a fine talent to his publisher's inventiveness and his public's appetite for things signed with his name. I think of a certain poetess press-agented into nullity. But why continue? It is too depressing.

"No genuine literature is written to please anyone but the author's self or those he feels to be his equals. What is Shakespearean in Shakespeare was aimed, if it was aimed at anyone but Shakespeare himself, not at the groundlings but at Ben and the rest of the chosen few semper and ubique. So, today, Frost and Robinson and others of a genius similarly tough, go their own way, follow who can; while another poet, of equal promise, has been unable to withstand his publisher's siren song and is giving the public what it wants—making better business but worse literature.

"How different from the Maecenas way! A patron's business is to understand, to give with patience and to receive with tact—in short, to foster genius, not to force it. But the public never waits and must be served, and the publisher is there to understand the public, not the author. How often have I heard it said that such and such a publisher is a good publisher because he has a sense of what will sell! Between him and the public which he watches like a hawk there is small room for an author with illusions of perfection. But sweep away your publisher. Cut off your author from all contamination with the public, and see what happens. Pass a law that there shall be no multiple production of manuscript except in longhand. You will not kill literature, but you will kill much that passes under its name. It takes something really good to be worth copying out by hand, as the Greeks and Romans well knew. I often wonder what their literature would have been like had they known the printing press. Hardly the collection of masterpieces we know today! But, however that may be, here is an idea for your Utopian state.

"Of course, the connection of literature with a patron-public via a publisher is one of long standing. It dates indeed from the invention of printing. But the evils attending on it have not always been so great as they are now. For a long time the reading public was also a thinking public. With the vast extension

of education of the high-school grade that we find in America today, this is no longer true. The patron-public has lost in quality what it has gained in numbers—and in purchasing power. It is now terrifyingly numerous, rich and stupid. Criticism has long ago ceased to influence it, and book reviews suffice its modest needs. It 'knows what it likes,' which means it likes only what it knows, and what reflects its own limitations. Under its influence the strongly acid or bitter and purging arts, like satire and tragedy, have become extinct. Farce and 'musical shows' have driven comedy off the boards. The epic, with its stern demands, is dead. Philosophy is confined to the classroom; theology has disappeared into the cloister; oratory, as a fine art, is unheard of and preaching has given way to plain talks on social betterment. The many-headed master must be served and the literary man must serve with the rest; and so it will continue to be until this form of art is rescued from prostitution to the multitude and patronage is restored to the few who know and care. 'The public be damned' may be bad politics, but it is the foundation of fine art."

Having thus unburdened himself, the Publisher turned back to his desk and went on figuring how to sell the greatest possible number of books in the shortest possible time.

All Souls

Thou everlasting Rest,
Grant Thou Thyself to them, who have at last
The bound of this fleet transience overpast;
All that they have transgressed
Thou of Thy mercy pardon, holding fast
These ransomed to Thy Breast.

Yet is it ours to plead
For any sheep Thou holdest in Thy care?
Must Thy wide mercy ask our feeble prayer?
Do we not rather need
That they who live in Thy communion there
For us should intercede?

Yes: it shall well behove
Us who by Babel's waters homesick sit
And those whose passion by sure hope is lit
To join Thy saints above
In prayer that of Thy threefold Church be knit
One fellowship of love.

Until the trumpet sound,
And all within the graves shall hear Thy word,
And Thy tribunal righteous doom afford,
And those Thy blessed found
Are called to be forever with the Lord,
Among Thine armies crowned,

O Mercy infinite!
For them we plead, as they for us, who pray
When faith, that lights our little earthly day,
Is swallowed up in sight,
Grant them the rest that shall not pass away,
And everlasting light.

ALAN S. McDOUGALL.

PLAIN FACTS FOR AMERICANS

By MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THE COMMONWEAL in its last number briefly mentioned the publication of *The Calvert Handbook of Catholic Facts*,* and expressed an opinion that the appearance of this little volume was an event of real public importance. Most certainly this is true. It is the purpose of the present article to state as clearly and as briefly as possible the reasons why *The Commonweal* holds such an opinion, and why the Calvert Associates felt obliged to publish such a book and to use extraordinary means to bring it to the attention of the American public. That these means are indeed extraordinary may be judged from the fact that a group of nearly two-score eminent citizens of many religious beliefs and of both political parties are sponsoring this work. They were called together at the instance of Mr. Ralph Adams Cram, the architect of the Episcopal Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, who is one of the directors of the Calvert Associates. His remarkable letter accepting membership in the Calvert Associates Special Committee rang through the land like a bugle blast, the echoes of which are still vibrating, and similar utterances by Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University attracted an even wider attention—attention, however, which had already been stirred by the splendid patriotic letters and speeches of Dr. Henry van Dyke, Mr. George Gordon Battle and Professor W. M. Forrest of the University of Virginia; the editorials of Mr. Julian Harris of the *Enquirer-Sun* of Columbus, Georgia, and those of the *Hartford Courant*, the *New York World*, the *New York Times*, and many other newspapers; and—as it is only just, proper and consoling to recall—the statements of Bishop Candler of the Methodist Church South, and scores of other representative Protestant and Jewish clergymen throughout the country. These extraordinary means also include the raising of a fund of \$100,000, the largest portion of which is being expended in advertising *The Calvert Handbook of Catholic Facts* in newspapers and magazines from coast to coast, and in the distribution of the handbook and similar educational pamphlets by hundreds of thousands of copies.

For these reasons, and others which will be stated further on, this article is, if not a chapter, certainly the material for a chapter, of primary importance in the social, political and religious history of the United States. Professor A. M. Schlessinger, of the department of history at Harvard University, wrote to me a few days ago requesting that the facts with which I am now dealing—or, rather, the facts which com-

pelled the Calvert Associates to issue their handbook—be gathered now, and recorded before they are dispersed or, possibly, forgotten; although it is inconceivable that they will ever be forgotten by those at least who are fully aware of them. Professor Schlessinger says that it is his desire

to accumulate a representative file of the "whispering" literature that is being circulated in opposition to Governor Smith in the present campaign. I hope that you may be disposed to coöperate with me in getting this material. Personally I am supporting the Governor for President and have so publicly announced; but my purpose in wanting this material grows out of my profession as an American historian and teacher of American history. It seems to me a matter of essential importance that when the political history of our era is written up, this underground literature should be available to historians. As you know, it is hard to obtain and, being by its very nature casual and ephemeral, it will be harder to obtain five years from now than it is today. I can assure you that any you help me to get will be carefully preserved and available to future students of American political and social history.

What I am now writing will be part of what Professor Schlessinger and many other historians will require when they come to deal with the most amazing phase of American life through which we are now passing. Such statements demand justification if they are to escape the charge of being merely emotional, or inflated, or exaggerated for partizan purposes. I will attempt this justification, and if part of what I say seems unduly personal, I trust that the personal portion will be recognized as a necessary part of the record.

For fifteen years I have been engaged almost exclusively in the study of conditions and facts having to do with the present position of the Catholic Church in the United States. Before the establishment of the Calvert Associates and their organ, *The Commonweal*, I was an editor of or a contributor to a large number of Catholic publications. Throughout all this period I also have steadily contributed articles having to do with various aspects of Catholicism in America to a large number of secular newspapers, magazines and reviews, and I have published three full-length books as part of the same work. These writings were not composed in the seclusion of a study or at an office at any fixed point. Nearly every state in the union, and all the chief cities, have been visited repeatedly. My observations, experiences and studies, then, on which this mass of work has been based, have been at first hand, they have been continuous, and practical, not theoretical. And, coming now to the important point which this personal testimony is meant to sup-

* *The Calvert Handbook of Catholic Facts*. New York: *The Calvert Associates*, Grand Central Terminal. 139 pages. 25 cents postpaid.

port—from first to last during these fifteen years, I have believed and maintained, in spite of many minor disillusiones and experiences that seemed to challenge my belief, that the average American man or woman, no matter what his or her form or degree of religious faith might be, was essentially fair-minded, was on the whole ready to give reasonable consideration to facts dealing with any social problem, and, above all, could be depended upon to be loyal to those primary principles of the American nation which are guaranteed by the constitution: namely, the complete and real separation of church and state and the non-application of any religious test to any candidate for public office. I wish emphatically to reaffirm this belief, and to say that it has guided my share in the work of the Calvert Associates, particularly their present work of which *The Calvert Handbook of Catholic Facts* is an instrument, even as I go on to say that, although I have always known that there was a considerable amount of anti-Catholic prejudice in the United States, I have been amazed beyond adequate expression by the revelation which this political campaign brought about of the heavily financed, skilfully organized, deliberately planned and nation-wide movement which, directly or indirectly, has attacked these fundamental precepts of religious liberty. The strength and extent of this movement far surpasses any previous movement of the sort—such as Know-nothingism, the A. P. A. movement or the uprising of the second Ku Klux Klan.

Some months before the Republican and Democratic conventions, I made a journey in the interests of *The Commonweal* from New York to California and back again, visiting a large number of the most important cities North, South, East and West. I met all sorts and conditions of people, both casually and by appointment. I carefully watched the press. I made special investigations as to the extent and possibilities of the future development of religious prejudice in the campaign about to open. As a result, I wrote in *The Commonweal*, and felt happy to do so, that it seemed to me that the peak of the religious prejudice that had been manifesting itself had been reached and passed, and that the ugly and menacing thing was on the decline, and would probably not cut any particular figure in the convention. I deceived myself; or at any rate appearances deceived me. What I then experienced was merely the lull before the onrush of the cyclone. After the nomination of Governor Smith at Houston that cyclone gathered, and from that day until this it has traversed the whole nation, leaving spiritual and moral and social disaster in its wake. Families are divided. Communities are rent into sections and warring parties. Whole states are convulsed by sinister passions. The integrity of the nation itself, its unity, its very purpose, are challenged.

Let us come to some facts in support of these somewhat sweeping assertions. They prove beyond peradventure of a doubt that certain Protestant bodies

have been, and as I write still are, opposing the election of Governor Alfred E. Smith of New York as President of the United States mainly or solely because he is a Catholic. *The Commonweal* has said over and over again, and once more it repeats, that it recognizes that many good citizens, hundreds of thousands of them Catholics, will vote against Governor Smith on other grounds—because he is a Democrat, because he is opposed to prohibition, because they prefer what they regard as the superior qualifications of Mr. Hoover; and for such citizens *The Commonweal* has no criticism; they are acting strictly within their rights; and it is well for the nation, for any nation indeed, that professes political liberty, that they should act as their party loyalty or their individual judgment exercised on purely political grounds leads them to act. But no fair-minded observer of the plain facts of the present situation can honestly deny that a very large part of the opposition to Governor Smith, possibly even the decisive factor, is nothing other than the un-American and wholly obnoxious opposition to him on the ground of his Catholic religion.

The most careful estimation that it is possible now to make proves that such anti-Catholic newspapers as the *Fellowship Forum*, the *New Menace*, the *Rail-Splitter*, the *Protestant*, the *Yellow Jacket*, the *Lash*, the *Crusader of Florida*, formerly *Shuler's Weekly*, and others which have sprung up like poisonous toadstools, circulate to the amazing extent of between three and five million copies weekly. The circulation of vicious and mostly anonymous pamphlets and magazines, such as the *Bulletin of the Sons and Daughters of Washington*, published by J. W. Forest of Albany, N. Y.; *Bob Shuler's Magazine*, Los Angeles; the *Good Citizen of Zarephath*, New Jersey; the *Church of Rome in American Politics*; *Priest and Woman*, a *Book for Wives, Mothers and Daughters*, compiled by Mrs. William Lloyd Clark; *Should Al Smith Be President? or Shall the Democratic Party Become the Party of Rome and Romanism?*, by Celsus E. Tull, D. D., Pine Bluff, Arkansas; *Political Record of Al Smith: the Roman Catholic Clerical Party's Candidate for the Presidency of the United States*, published by the *Fellowship Forum*; *Christ or the Pope—America or Rome—Which?*

These, and at least a score of similar publications, are to be found in all parts of the country, but more particularly in the southern states, upstate in New York, in Long Island, and in the rural sections of New Jersey, the New England states, Delaware, Maryland, the border and the middle-western states. In addition, there are endless chain-letter-writing systems at work everywhere, distributing falsehoods and scandals and, at times, highly indecent statements which are too vile even for these peddlers in printed obscenity and outrageous falsehoods. And this takes no account of the hundreds of thousands if not millions of copies, anonymously printed, published and distributed, containing the vilely false bogus oath of the

Knights of Columbus; usually printed on paper which carries the legend "The Congressional Record," conveying the impression that it is either a government publication, or else that its statements are supported by the government; the truth, of course, being that the Congressional Record at the time it printed the bogus oath also printed a complete and what should have been a final refutation of the outrageous lie. Nor does what I have said anything like complete the picture. There are radio stations, like the poisonous WHAP of New York, conducted by Mr. Franklin Ford, whose father—ironical circumstance!—was the highly distinguished and respected Henry Jones Ford, professor of political history at Princeton University who became a Catholic in his mature manhood, and was one of the first editorial writers for *The Commonwealth*. Bob Shuler has a similar station in Los Angeles. Saint Paul Presbyterian Church broadcasts sermons by Dr. D. A. Vriegled, asking such questions as, "Did a Catholic Shoot Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley and Roosevelt?" "What Effect Will Obregon's Death Have on Al Smith's Candidacy?" "Why Was this Mason and Gifted Protestant Leader Killed?"

From Trinity Methodist Church, Bob Shuler broadcasts such questions as these: "Was Abraham Lincoln Assassinated by a Roman Catholic?" "Is the Roman Machine Directly Connected with the Policy of Assassination?" "May We Expect Assassinations during the Present Political Campaign?" These rhetorical questions are answered by many of the posters pasted on church walls, schoolhouses, and elsewhere in many parts of the country, posters which proclaim: "Choosing Between Hoover and Smith Is Like Choosing Between Jesus and Barabbas." "Could Catholics Murder Mayor Harrison of Chicago and Then Elect a Catholic as Mayor of the City? They Did Do It." "Could Catholics Murder Mayor Gaynor of New York and Then Elect a Catholic as Mayor of That City? They Did Do It." "Could Catholics Murder Our Presidents, Such Noble Characters as Lincoln, Garfield and McKinley, and Then Elect a Roman Catholic as President of These United States? They Did Do It. That Is for You Protestants to Decide in the November Election." Another poster says: "To Murder Protestants and Destroy American Government Is the Oath Binding Roman Catholics." This statement is proved—so far as the poster can prove it—by quoting the bogus oath of the Knights of Columbus. The "Public Is Cordially Invited," by this particular poster, "To Hear the Protestant Joan of Arc." The lady's name and address, however, are not given.

Nor is this all; it is not a half of it; it is not a quarter of it; it is in some respects the least serious portion of it all. There have been, from the beginning of this nation, profiteers in prejudice; harpies of hatred; poisoners of the sources of truth; sowers of dissension at a price; and that they should be reaping a harvest at present is only to be expected, and might be passed

by with a sad shrug of the shoulders, were it not for the fact that these merchants in mendacity are not selling their wares at present; they are giving them away; giving them away by hundreds of thousands, by millions of copies. Who is paying for them? What forces seek to profit in another way than financially by this subsidization of these sewer rats of this republic? But what is shocking and almost shattering to the faith in democracy of fair-minded Americans is the fact that, in addition to all that I have said above, certain other plain facts must be faced by American citizens.

What do they think of the action of the Association of Lutheran Editors, in which these editors pledge themselves to oppose Governor Smith's candidacy principally because he is a Catholic? What are they to think of the manifesto of the Ohio Anti-saloon League, the organ of Bishop Cannon and other prominent Methodists, who really are the Anti-saloon League, declaring that Governor Smith's religion, as the *New York Times* editorially put the matter, "is the head and front of his offending. He is to be kept out of the Presidency at all hazards because he is an enemy of 'this Anglo-Saxon Protestant country' "? What are they to think of the fact that R. H. Angell, the Republican state chairman of Virginia, is one of the owners of the Fellowship Forum, and after that malodorous fact was exposed in the public press, was maintained in his office, and even accompanied Mr. Hoover's party on its trip into the southern states? What are they to think of the performance of Mrs. Mabel Walker Willebrandt, Assistant United States Attorney-General, and a member of the high command of the Republican party, in her appeal to the 2,500 Methodist pastors of Ohio to use their pulpits to oppose Governor Smith? She was careful to make it clear that they must oppose him because of his views on prohibition, and not because he is a Catholic: but what are American citizens to say about this? Shall sworn and paid servants of their government set themselves up, apparently with a claim to infallibility unapproached by any Pope, to declare what is or is not a moral issue in politics, and thereupon proceed to enlist the power of the pulpit for or against a candidate of an opposite party? What are they to think of the claims of so many politically partizan Protestant newspapers and clergymen who have separated Governor Smith's religion from his prohibition views, and say that they oppose him merely because of the latter, in view of the statement in the *Methodist Christian Advocate*, August 18, 1927, that Senator Thomas J. Walsh of Montana, a prohibitionist, is

of the highest character of a Roman Catholic of the best type. . . . It has been expressed among his closest political associates that if Mr. Walsh were elected to the Presidency he would not allow the Pope to dictate his program while in the White House.

The *Methodist Christian Advocate*, however, goes on significantly to add that

he would doubtless be unknowingly influenced in his acts by the organized forces of Romanism at work in Washington.

I might continue, indefinitely, but the continuance of this story must be the work of some such historian as Professor Schlessinger. It is too voluminous to be more than sketched in the most fragmentary fashion in these pages. But the record is being kept, as Professor Schlessinger and so many others desire; it will be published; its publication is a necessity, in view of the struggle that lies ahead of us all.

This is the real reason for the publication of *The Calvert Handbook of Catholic Facts*. Catholics, as always happens, were caught almost totally unprepared by the present storm. While the forces of hateful anti-American intolerance were organized a long time ago—the work began immediately after the Democratic convention of 1924—Catholics went ahead as usual, paying next to no attention to the signs and omens which foretold the present crisis. Bishop Noll and his little paper, *Our Sunday Visitor*, and his assistant, Mr. Robert R. Hull, with his exceedingly inadequate Catholic information bureau, were vigilant. The Catholic Laymen's League has been doing and continues to do a fine but terribly restricted work of education in Georgia, the influence of which was felt in some degree in the nearby states. The Paulist Press, the America Press, the Catholic Truth Society and a few other organizations or individuals published little pamphlets which had a small sale in the church racks, and the sketchiest of distribution outside of Catholic circles, and that was about all. When the storm broke there came multitudinous appeals from all parts of the country for information to spread among the people, disturbed, puzzled, frightened or appalled by the mass, the weight, the quantity and the dreadful character of the anti-Catholic literature that literally flooded the South, the Middle-West and the rural sections of the northern states. Doing their feeble best to meet this enormous demand for facts, the Calvert Associates, with the coöperation of the agencies mentioned above, and of many individuals, some of the most useful of whom were non-Catholics, compiled in great haste, and conscious of the deficiencies of their work, *The Handbook of Catholic Facts*. Fortunately there was that invaluable bedrock, or quarry, of indisputable truth to draw upon, the Catholic Encyclopedia. Such as it is, then, here it is, the gathering together of information scattered through a score of pamphlets and leaflets, or drawn from the more solid and substantial material of the Catholic Encyclopedia. Supporting the educational work the Calvert Associates were attempting to do are the public-spirited citizens, some of whose names are contained in the handbook itself. But what are Catholic citizens going to do? Are they going to yield to that baseless yet very pervasive political superstition that Catholics when attacked politically as

Catholics should shut up and leave any defense to their non-Catholic fellow-citizens? Are they going to take their part in the work being done by such men as Dr. Butler, Dr. Henry van Dyke, the Honorable John W. Davis, Rabbi Wise, Mr. Raymond B. Fosdick, Mr. Ralph Adams Cram, the Honorable Carter Glass and thousands of other Protestant and Jewish public leaders, clergymen, editors and others, or shall they remain silent and inactive? Only a mere handful have answered the appeal of the Calvert Associates for funds which are being expended in their work. Few, indeed, have so far answered our appeal to them at least to buy and distribute the pamphlets and books already available, and to spread them where their contents would educate, enlighten and help to protect their threatened status as American citizens, and the threatened status of the American nation itself. I speak from experience when I say that it was not Catholics who demanded and who really forced whatever public action has so far been taken to meet the assault of anti-American intolerance. There is a noble but I think a mistaken motive which partly explains Catholic inaction.

Catholics as a class are loath indeed to make public manifestation of their religion. They detest dragging their religion into the arena, so miry today, of partizan politics. In the United States of America, neither as an organized church nor as organized groups, save at times locally and under provocation, have they fought Protestants as Protestants in political matters. This record I believe is indisputable. Hundreds of thousands of Catholics today are loyally supporting the Republican candidate. That they shall continue to do so if the motives that actuate them are to their own minds adequate, is the earnest desire of *The Commonwealth*. But that Catholics, whether Republicans or Democrats, should hang back from their plain duty of standing up for their own rights as American citizens and as Catholic Christians in the present crisis seems to me, as it seems to the majority of fair-minded non-Catholic citizens, a grave dereliction of duty. This, at any rate, is how the matter seems to those who have prepared and who published *The Calvert Handbook of Catholic Facts*, which briefly, clearly and honestly answers even the ridiculous as well as the cowardly or treacherous assaults made upon the patriotism of American Catholics, and also those reasonable and justifiable questions which occur to the minds of fair-minded and thoughtful Americans who may not understand the present position of American Catholics in relation to the laws and institutions of this country.

These Autumn Days

These autumn days are strangely still:
The crickets now tick on and on
Like clocks within a silent house
When one we love is gone.

ALICE GOULD.

THE BATTLE-FRONT IN OCTOBER

By CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON

A PRESIDENTIAL campaign is something like a battle. A civilian onlooker sees a regiment charging here, a battery firing there, positions being captured and retaken, and is a good deal bewildered; everything seems to be shifting every minute. After the battle it turns out that it was fought pretty strictly according to the lines laid down at the beginning by the rival generals. This is no description of all the battles that ever were fought, it is needless to say. It happens often enough, however, to furnish a fair analogy to the movements in a political campaign which so befog the innocent bystander.

In this campaign, whatever may be said of some others, the fight has been according to plan, and nothing has happened at the time these lines are written to derange the strategy. It is true that Mr. Hoover is exceedingly annoyed and disconcerted because the fight will insist on taking different lines from that which he had planned, because what he considers irrelevant issues will keep on cropping out. But this is only because he is inexperienced; Mr. Smith, who is a veteran, made all the allowances for such irrelevances and is not in the least disconcerted. They both keep their eyes fixed on the main points of their strategy and refuse to be sidetracked, and that is the main thing; the only difference is that Mr. Smith is cheerful and Mr. Hoover is perturbed when a raiding party with an irrelevant issue ambuscades one of their brigades.

In no respect—at the time of this writing—has either party departed from the program of its candidate. The partizan newspapers have tried to make it appear that they have, but this is not true. Mr. Hoover's original program was to run, not as Mr. Hoover, but as the Republican party. The Republican party has a normal majority of 4,000,000 votes, and all it has to do is to hold those votes. It does not have to argue an issue, to make an attack or even to make a defense, provided nothing occurs to detach 2,000,000 of those voters. If they are satisfied, it can safely remain silent; it can even admit, inferentially, that the Democrats are right in everything they say, in every attack they make. Of course this is an extreme way of putting it, since no party would ever adopt such a course of unblushing effrontery; but if it has the votes—and normally the Republican party always has them—it could do it safely enough.

Mr. Hoover came as near to adopting this very course as any candidate ever did. His program was to obliterate himself, so far as he could. The Republican party at Kansas City nominated, not Mr. Hoover, but the Republican party; the name at the masthead made no difference; it might be Hoover, Jones or Brown. The plan was to stand pat on 4,000,000

majority votes, and for that purpose to admit no issues—or only one. That one was what the Republicans call “the prosperity issue,” meaning, “If you want business to continue good, don't make a change.”

On this original line the Republican campaign has been waged. When Republican speakers have apparently discussed other issues, it has been only shadow-boxing. Their real reliance has been on that issue alone, and they have not cared a penny whether their hearers did or did not take seriously some speech of theirs alleging, for instance, that the Democratic organization in the county of New York—or “Tammany Hall”—would use President Smith as a puppet.

Mr. Hoover ought to be perfectly satisfied with the admirably efficient way in which his party has carried out his plans, and he would be if he were not an amateur at that sort of thing. When a general plans a campaign he always makes allowances for the fact that the enemy is planning something different. Mr. Smith did plan a different campaign, and carried out his plan just as Mr. Hoover did; and the result is that Mr. Hoover is displaying annoyance and irritation over the fact that other issues than the one he determined on—“many issues and movements that have nothing to do fundamentally with the prosperity and progress of the country,” as he put it on one such occasion—were being allowed to divert the public mind from the one originally planned issue of “prosperity.”

Mr. Smith, like Mr. Hoover, has not deviated in the slightest from the campaign plan he mapped out at the beginning; and his party, like Mr. Hoover's, has for once moved like a well-disciplined army under its new leader. Mr. Smith planned to make his campaign one of attack, and he has made it one; not an attack of fault-finding, like Mr. Hughes's campaign against Mr. Wilson in 1916; but an attack designed to convince those necessary two millions that there were things seriously and radically inimical to the welfare of the nation which had grown up during the long period of Republican rule and were inherent in it, and that he could be trusted to remove them.

To that end he planned a speaking campaign, to consist of as few speeches as possible, instead of talking continuously to every crowd he could reach, as Mr. Cox did in 1920. In each speech he planned to take up a single issue, and to treat it so thoroughly as to make the public talk about it and keep on talking about it—and thinking about it. In this way he would set before the people, one after another, all the things that are fundamentally wrong and dangerous, in his opinion, in that government which began when Mr. Wilson went out of office, and have continued to grow.

First he took up the fact, which nobody any longer disputes, that the farmers are not getting all the bene-

fits of "prosperity" which some other people are getting. He made a speech in which he argued, first that this condition had been known to the Republican party for many years; secondly, that the party had made many promises to do something about it, but had never carried out any of these promises; thirdly, that evidently the Republican party did not intend to carry out any of them; and fourthly, that he would set himself most seriously about the business if he were elected, and would begin by summoning the farm leaders, such as ex-Governor Lowden, to draft a system of relief which he would use the presidential powers to have enacted.

Having thus discussed the farm question, he passed on in his next speech to another issue, and so on. But he was not scattering his fire. He had planned not merely to talk about a separate issue in each speech, but to use it up; and, for campaign purposes at least, that is what he did. The effect of his Omaha speech on farm relief, though it was delivered in September, is still spreading, though we are far on in October. Farm leaders, satisfied, are taking the stump for him in increasing numbers; progressive or La Follettian newspapers and organizations are coming over to him, a month after that speech was made; and as these lines are written Senator Blaine of Wisconsin, a Republican who, a month ago, was neutral between the two candidates, is opening a stumping tour for Smith.

There is no space to discuss Smith's other speeches, and it is not necessary, since they are all alike in this respect. My only purpose is to show, by illustration, the meaning of Smith's strategy as opposed to Hoover's. In this matter of farm relief he did seem to Hoover to be bringing into the campaign an "issue and movement that has nothing to do fundamentally with the prosperity and progress of our country," to use the Hooverian phrase. He was, in plainer words, distracting attention from the one matter which the Hoover strategy had determined should be the only question discussable in this campaign—the "prosperity" issue, which means the holding solid of those four Republican millions by fear for their bank balances if Smith should be elected.

The partizan newspapers misrepresent the strategy of these two leaders, of course. The Democratic papers misrepresent Hoover as a nonentity, obediently taking orders from his masters on what to say, or rather, when to remain silent; which is ridiculous. It is Hoover who is giving the orders. The Republican papers misrepresent Smith as jumping in a panic from one subject to another, afraid to mention farm relief or prohibition again lest he lose votes; which is still more ridiculous. For Smith, tackling one subject in every speech, but doing it in such a way as to make people talk and go on talking about it, is carrying out the well-considered strategy he had finally determined on in June, and will not be swayed from it. That it is good strategy may be seen from a single illustration: before he came into Tennessee that state was virtually

conceded to Hoover, and now it is concededly doubtful. Even James W. Good, Hoover's astute western manager, admits it, though he is so little inclined to concede anything as to make the preposterous claim that Wisconsin is certainly Hoover's.

In Washington there is a belief—entertained even among Republican leaders—that this strategy of Hoover's was the result of advice given to him by President Coolidge. It is a fact that it resembles Coolidge's own strategy in 1924, which was to stand pat and to ignore the attacks of John W. Davis completely. There is a difference, however; Coolidge's obliviousness of his existence had the effect of angering Davis, while Hoover's similar course seems—so far at least—merely to amuse Smith. Apologizing to one of his audiences for answering such comparatively small fry as Chairman Work and Secretary Jardine, he said in his tone of satirical good humor, "You have to debate with *somebody*, I suppose," and the crowd laughed. But up to this writing he has given every evidence of understanding Hoover's strategy and being perfectly willing to let him get away with it; at any rate, of not being trapped into irritation by it.

I doubt the Washington gossip on this point. It is probable enough that Coolidge did give Hoover such advice; he would be very likely to, if Hoover asked for it, and it is just the kind of advice he would give. But Hoover is no such docile orphan as to take any dose the doctor orders; and his strategy in this campaign is just the kind of strategy Hoover would naturally adopt, whether Coolidge or anybody else advised it or not. Since, every four years, the American people loses its reason for four months and believes everything that is sufficiently impossible, there are many now who believe Hoover is a mindless kindergartner in leading strings. In actuality, he is so much his own man that that very fact, if he is elected, will be the principal peril to the success of his administration. The President who won't listen to others is always the unsuccessful President; not that there is any evidence to suggest that Hoover's self-assertion would carry him that far.

If the campaign strategy is proceeding along the lines laid down in June—as it is—so are the other main features. Aside from this matter of strategy, the two interesting questions were, What will the issues be? and, Where are the doubtful states, on which the election will turn? Despite all the uproar, the situation on both these matters is just what it was in June. The issues, including the hidden one of bigotry (which Smith dragged into the open permanently at Oklahoma City) are the same as then and their relative importance is the same; no red herrings have obscured the trail. The only change in the June list of doubtful states is that there is now more uncertainty about Minnesota, Nebraska and North Carolina. All the whooping about Alabama, for instance, is as senseless as it would be about Vermont. In all three respects, then the October situation is the June situation.

MR. BEVERIDGE'S LINCOLN

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

LIKE thousands of other boys "nursed on the bosom of the Middle-West"—as a favorite Wisconsin orator of yore used to put it—I grew up looking at pictures of Abraham Lincoln. There were three in the newspaper office, all reverently dusted by an editor who pinned inspiring lines from the Gettysburg Address to the masthead of his weekly. Another hung a little crookedly before you as you submitted to the dentist, who was likewise the town ornithologist and Shakespearean authority. There were so many in other places that the memory of them blends into one vast, homely face surrounded by fragments of cobwebs and the heat of office stoves. And to a greater extent than we generally realize, despite all idealizations of Lincoln, that face is the image of the pioneer Middle-West.

Civilization as it came to be in the Mississippi Valley during the years following Tippecanoe was certainly one of the most vivid American adventures. It developed, almost after the fashion of a symphony, the urge to "push on" so characteristic of early immigration; and there are dozens of brief staccato passages—the search for lead north of Galena, or the hunt for California gold—which still quicken the pulse of a reader of history and make him doubt the reasonableness of his easy chair. But the Middle-West was also virile with constructive, settling-down energy. Little by little shreds of social caste and industrial combination are pasted on the broad pioneer landscape; college men go into little towns, blending a curious shrewdness with what is not infrequently a fantastic idealism; and men are woven into political patterns, one or the other of which is destined to stamp the nation with a kind of indelible custom. Add the forces of moral and religious emotion, anti-deistic Protestantism, temperance and Know-nothing excitements, and you see that this populace of pioneers, originally so individualistic, is being churned into a community.

Much of the frontier mind was raw, crude, flamboyant, illiterate, merely pretentious. From their favorite jokes to their sermons, these Middle-westerners were without much flexibility of intellect or sense of proportion. Sometimes, indeed, they were mere louts or (what is possibly more harrowing) victims of the moving van. But the best among them preserved a magnificent fondness for reason (which they called horse-sense) and a genuine generosity of soul. It is impossible to forget the dignity which they brought to the profession of law, or the sacrificial integrity with which they practised medicine. To have known men like Judge Howard of Indiana, or Dr. Drake of Cincinnati, is to have been familiar with a regal race and to have convinced oneself of the sturdi-

ness of the republic. And so the story of the Middle-West is at once a tale of triumph and a tragedy. The boorish prejudices and slovenly provincialisms of 1928 testify to the fact that pioneer conditions could wear people out, body and spirit; but the energy of 1928 is the bequest of conquerors.

These things are all indispensable to a national diagnosis. It is, however, obvious that most of us are losing contact with them. Schoolboys of thirty years ago could still feel in the texture of their little home cities those threads which had sewed the nation together. The steady tramp of the G. A. R.—yearly waves of homespun men in brass-buttoned blue coats—resurrected the surge of the tremendous epic out of which the hero Lincoln emerged. And as one came to know these men better, in law offices, stores or the harvest fields, one saw that the face of Lincoln was repeated in them—that the Emancipator was no strange "flash" of unfamiliar genius but rather the perfect coin in a heap of kindred human coins.

Thus our study of him takes on a new significance. It is to be something more than passionate research into the mystery of an individual life. We want no Lincoln impaled on a kind of pin for observation by analysts of one kind or another, but a Lincoln who is a crystallization of a historic American mind. So far no biography has been adequate from this point of view. There are a dozen satisfactory brief portraits of the man, and Dr. William Barton's volumes may safely be considered an admirable summary of the personal facts. Little by little students and contemporaries had amplified the record—or built up the myth—until it seemed incredible that anything more could be learned about the great man. His virtue was proved beyond a doubt, and the silent reaches of his soul enkindled a holy awe. Humor and tenderness, justness of vision and virility of execution, all of them our favorite traits, shone out from him.

Now comes Senator Beveridge's Abraham Lincoln,* devoting its two ample volumes to the task that still remained. Regrettably enough the author died before his work was fully completed; and of course he could not even begin the second section of the projected biography, which was to have carried the story through the Civil War period. There is, however, no need for reverting to the familiar image of the torso. Lincoln between the years of 1809 and 1858 is here just as Beveridge saw him, with the aid of a truly extraordinary mass of informative material. And he is not an isolated or remote Lincoln. He rises with the frontier about him. Occasionally the social current

**Abraham Lincoln*, by Albert I. Beveridge. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. \$12.50.

engulfs him, but slowly he masters it, drinks in its substance, transmutes its individuality into his own, hardens his character through the constant friction of its necessities. Beveridge looks at an era and finds its hero. He reconstructs the scene with a deft, meticulous impartiality, and Lincoln takes his natural and predestined place.

Briefly speaking, there are three areas of contact between Honest Abe and his time. The first is the domain of the settler, pushing forward into new wilderness, dispensing with the niceties of civilization and subjecting his spirit to the test of crudity. Lincoln's family was almost shiftlessly migratory. They went from barren land in Kentucky over miserable roads to the Indiana forest, and then on into Illinois. Abraham's destiny is first revealed in a passion for reading and learning—an almost abstracted fondness for the things of the mind, which are held in mingled scorn and veneration by his neighbors. Beveridge paints the man and his environment with almost pitiless impartiality, so that the raw homeliness of Lincoln stands out as clearly as the sallowness of Spanish sovereigns abides in the portraits of masters. Only a man who knew this frontier life could have drawn it with such vivid detachment. The romantic cabins which city folk project into the distant country have no part in this description. It is impossible to visualize Nancy Hanks Lincoln more realistically than Beveridge does in a few crisp, understanding lines. And her husband?

He drifted across and down the Ohio to a landing on the Indiana bank, like a piece of human flotsam thrown forward by the tide of immigration, the black and prodigious depths of mighty woods before him.

Then there was frontier society, the meaning of which in Lincoln's life has never before been fully appreciated. Possibly Beveridge made a little too much of this, but he has not erred on the side of extravagance as far as previous writers have erred on the side of understatement. The burden of the Lincoln-Hanks ancestry was sometimes heavy as lead. It may, perhaps, be considered partly responsible for the normal futility of Lincoln's relations with women; but it was no doubt also the source of that mingled humility and ambition to advance which determined the trend of his career. In Springfield Lincoln married his way into the powerful Edwards family, but frequently enough paid toll to the caste convictions of his wife. The Beveridge method of dealing with these matters is to account for them fully. Thus the most baffling incident in the story, Lincoln's abuse of Shields and his acceptance of a challenge to fight a duel, is here unfolded with a prodigality of interpretative evidence. Barton devotes fewer lines to the matter than Beveridge does pages. This emphasis is justified because the episode really did mark a critical moment in Lincoln's development.

That development, however, was primarily a result of self-education in politics, which retained a distinctly

individual character in the early Middle-West. Here Beveridge's personal experience and hunger for complete documentation have accomplished a marvelous thing. No other book gives so lucid and instructive an account of the struggles through which the consciousness both of the Illinois province and of the nation as a whole passed during the years following Webster's reply to Hayne. Indefatigable as he is in disentangling the party struggles in which Lincoln displayed nothing more than the keenness of a local electioneer, Beveridge exhibits a really magnificent judiciousness in discussing the national problems through study of a contact with which a struggling lawyer of Springfield grew into the master of his country. History may some day unearth further details regarding the issue which expanded into the Lincoln-Douglas debates and finally into the Civil War, but it is doubtful if any firm strokes in the Beveridge picture will be changed.

Similarly the complex background of the Republican party, which had its roots in varied moral and emotional upheavals, is here analyzed by a man who understands public whims and moods as well as he does "issues." Nothing more careful and fair has been written about the abolitionist and temperance movements, the Know-nothing disturbances, or the significance of immigrant groups in American civic destiny. In short, here is a political and social history of the time and place in which Lincoln lived, which he reflected with startling accuracy, and above which he came to tower with a moving grandeur. Yet, broad though the canvas is, it remains a setting for the central figure. Sometimes you are hardly noticing Lincoln at all; but precisely because you are looking at him from a distance, as one in the crowd of his contemporaries, he gradually becomes easier to see and understand. Unquestionably, the whole of the war President is not here. We need the man as he suffered and struggled through years of tragedy to get a grip on the whole of him, embattled, tender, reasonable, but above all constantly clarifying his own soul. Yet to have gone with Beveridge as far as he was permitted to go is to have shared in a vision of American realities only too infrequently created by a book.

I have often felt that biography is one of the supreme arts and that (like all other crafts) it is best when it has learned from monumental models. And it may be we shall finally come to believe that the life of a man is most comprehensible when discerned in union with the experience of his people and age, even as the Old Testament tells the story of David so admirably because it relates at the same time the history of the Jews. At all events, Beveridge has proved that Lincoln's life must be also an account of America, and that, on the other hand, America is mirrored in Lincoln. That is why this deserves to be numbered among the books which would preserve the nation even if all the towers of Gotham and all the houses of Illinois should crumble into dust.

THE COUNTY SHOW

By PADRAIC COLUM

I LIKE Ballinagh for many reasons—one of them is that its name means The Mouth of the Ford of Steeds, and that name carries the suggestion of a stirring past. But Ballinagh has not lived up to its name; indeed it has forgotten what its name means; it is a crooked, listless little place; it is a dusty, muddy little place; it is a come-day-go-day-God-send-Sunday sort of a little place. Nothing stirs in it except when a circus comes. And that's not often. And the sort of a circus that comes there is not one to have thirty, or forty, or fifty horses in it. No boy in Ballinagh ever saw fifty circus horses being led down, ten by ten, to drink at the mouth of the ford wherever that ford may be, or helped a black man who was with them to do a score of things. No. The only circus that ever comes to Ballinagh is the sort of one that makes a procession through the town with a single van—clown, acrobats, dare-devil riders all in one van, one beating a drum and all the others blowing into fifes in an effort to stir things up. That is all that ever makes a stir there. And yet because I know a man who lives near the place and who once used to play The Cuckoo's Nest on the fiddle who can describe himself coming upon an otter "in the two lights" in a way that makes me feel that poets whom nobody has ever heard of have given him his lines, I'd be glad to be back there.

But I should not have mentioned Ballinagh only that a bus that goes through Meath passes by it. I got into that bus on a certain morning and saw a man there, and the moment I saw him I remembered that this was the very day of the County Fair and Exhibition in the town of Caven.

He had between his knees an ash-plant which had in it as many wriggles as a serpent: it seemed to be emblematical of the crooked roads he had been on. For this was a cattle-raising, cattle-driving man. His ash-plant had a head that was about as long as a goose's beak. On it there was the same sort of gloss as was on its owner's coat, and stick and coat had got that gloss from rubbing together. His suit of serge was glossed and greased, and his half-high hat was tobacco-colored. He was big, with small and intent blue eye; he gripped his ash-plant with his right hand and held his pipe in his left and examined the fields of oats and potatoes as we went by them. I knew him for a man who would be at the fair that day, taking note of the stock.

The horses were being led into the show ground as we got off the bus: they were striking the hard ground with their hoofs as they were being led along—an exciting clatter. We are a pastoral people and horses and cattle make a very direct appeal to us. The feeling which makes the Dublin Horse Show so vital an event is present in the smallest show in the dullest town in Ireland.

Historians and scribes of the old days have pre-

served descriptions of fairs when they let other events fall into oblivion. The tellers of the epic stories have put down descriptions of horses that are the most lifelike in any literature. These were the pomps of a life that was mainly pastoral, and so they went into history and poetry. The fairs which have been recorded must have been like the one here today: a mixture of horses and bulls and hounds, with strolling musicians and singers, held upon a green on a day of sunlight, with hounds barking, foals whinnying, cocks crowing, cattle lowing, dealers bawling out, rooks cawing in the ash trees, and trick-o'-the-loop men getting off their patter.

The day is fine; there is sunshine on the ash trees around the green; there is sunshine on the slopes that go up from the green. And now there is movement as the horses are being led across the green. The various humanity of the Irish countryside move round with them—"squireens" and their womenfolk: some of these young women are going into the jumping contest; they wear riding-breeches and, conscious that they are daring in doing it, they smoke cigarettes; the men smoke cigarettes, wear knickers with high stockings, and carry shooting-sticks on which they can seat themselves. The cattle-raising farmers carry ash-plants, and their sons switches. The sardonic-looking trick-o'-the-loop men are enticing little boys to stake pennies upon their peas. A seller of programs, a sporting youth, is putting down his with a swagger. One cannot help but notice how closely the human types approximate to the stock they are interested in. These straddle-legged men are all for horses. The heavy and slow-moving men, among whom is my friend with the ash-plant, follow the cattle around. The shouting, bearded men have to do with asses—their gait which is to keep beside a trotting ass tells us that.

And now I walk around the fair by myself. The carts which are on show upon the green have red wheels and long red shafts; they have middle boards of blue, and their reds and blues are indeed reds and blues. Green apples are heaped upon stalls which old women keep guard over. Geese, in pairs in cribs, lift up their heads and look at us with goose-grey eyes. Cocks with red enormous combs and with heckles are on roosts. Pigs in their pens have already turned up sods of the green. There are dogs on show—setters and greyhounds—and I hear a man say that it is now more profitable to breed greyhounds for racing than it is to breed pigs or sheep. And near the greyhounds, in hutches, are rabbits which no dog may chase—rabbits with fur that is grey and fleecy like clouds. Asses are here, too. But, groomed and sleek, they are far from being typical of the Irish countryside. Even though on show they are kept in their places: they have got to remember they are asses; their place is beside a ditch full of thistles and nettles.

You can put asses on show and you can put pigs on show, but you cannot put goats on show. You can bring them into the show ground, of course, and leave

them in a place by themselves. But wherever they are goats will be goats, insurgent and individual. Here they are tied but they go on cropping the hedges as if they were still on the ramble.

I thought at first that their owners had not that relation to the goats that the others had to their particular stock. They were boys, mostly, and they stood by their charges in a mixture of pride and shyness. They were proud that they had a place in the gathering of the county, but they knew, too, that other boys had their eyes on them, and were noting that they had been dressed up and sent out by mothers who had faith in the goat they had bred and reared. These boys stood by with a good deal of detachment: the goats they were in charge of were short-horned or hornless, they were sleek and mild-looking, and the native insurgency of the goat seemed not to be in them. And then I saw a particular man in charge of a particular goat. And him I knew to be really representative of all the goat-owners and goat-showers in Ireland for all time.

No boy could go near this particular goat without making some movement of defiance which was answered at once by a movement of offense. She had enormous horns that were curved, she had a great and a rank fleece. Her owner had no detachment. No owner of a two-thousand guinea racer ever led up his horse with as much trepidation as he led up his goat to the judges. "Barney," he called her. "Come, Barney," he said, and one could hear him say, "In the name of God," under his breath. He led her up to the judges and stood beside her, the perfect picture of what a goat owner should be like.

He carried neither a stick nor a switch; he smoked neither a pipe nor a cigarette; he chewed tobacco; he was stunted; he had roving eyes with a ragged cap pulled over them. "Come, Barney," he said, and he turned Barney around so that cool judges might scrutinize her udders. In the way he spoke there was all of the attachment a man might have for a goat.

Barney, scrutinized, was dismissed, and one of the sleek, hornless kind was given the prize.

But this creature was an original and her owner was an original also. This was the native goat, the goat of the ditches and the hedgerows. The asses were not originals; their owners were not originals. They would leave the fair green and walk along crooked roads, driving their asses before them. But not for the goat-owner these roads. He was a mountainy man. For him the whinny hillsides, the weedy fields. He will see the wren fluttering through the holly bushes and his ear will be cocked for the redbreast's song. A solitary, this man—as solitary as Barney, his goat. Some tumble-down shanty is his shelter, where Barney has a stretch of hedgerow to graze on. All he will get in the town is a glass of porter and a chew of tobacco. He leads his goat, unrewarded, away, his ragged cap pulled down over his roving eyes. Something tells me I shall see this mountainy man again.

EILEEN DUGGAN, POET

By THEODORE MAYNARD

THE *Commonweal* has been, I believe, the first and indeed the only American periodical in which Eileen Duggan's poems have appeared, though as a result of such publication several of them have been included in at least two anthologies and the foundations of a wider fame laid down. She is at present unknown in England or anywhere except her native New Zealand.

This is, however, merely a temporary state of affairs. For even in these days of a jostling multitude of singers and of singing schools, her voice has its own distinctive note, and her sincerity and charm will certainly gain for her ultimate recognition among lovers of good verse.

But there is no poet shyer or more diffident of her powers. The editor of the *New Zealand Tablet*, in which paper her earlier lyrics first saw the light of day, brought out a few years ago a pamphlet of twenty-two pages containing some of her verses. But this can hardly be called publication. There is no date affixed to the little collection, and no publisher's name. It was evidently produced merely to satisfy the demands of the readers of the *Tablet*, and has had no wider circulation. Even to do so much Father James Kelly, the editor, confesses that he had trouble in overcoming the modesty—rare to the point of being unheard of in a poet—of the young writer.

A friend of Miss Duggan's, however, sent, without saying anything about it to her, a copy of this pamphlet to A. E. in Ireland. He at once reviewed it, pointing out that she had a

delicacy and subtlety which one expects rather in civilizations which are old, where emotions have become refined through long generations of culture

than a small country lying on the rim of the world. He also noted that she displayed as much promise in her first book as any Irish "poetess" had ever shown, and busied himself, though unasked, in finding a publisher for her. But the Dublin publisher secured by the enthusiasm and good nature of Mr. George Russell went bankrupt before he had printed Miss Duggan's book, and the poet's disparagement of her own work has prohibited her from trying to find another.

Fortunately she is overcoming her shyness to the extent of now sending her work, which has improved since A. E. saw samples of it, a little further afield, where she learned to her surprised delight that it has received a welcome. So we may hope that the encouragement may eventually induce her to seek a greater permanence for her work.

While nearly all the poems of Eileen Duggan are such as only one whose mind is richly colored with the Faith could have produced, she rarely permits herself to be explicitly concerned with Catholic images. There is no need for that, since Catholicism is always

implicitly assumed, and is taken with quiet assurance as the background for Miss Duggan's vision.

The result is her complete success in avoiding the conventional, even in such of her poems as may be definitely classified as "religious." There is therefore nothing of that pious phraseology which, because of constant and perfunctory use, has become a material almost wholly intractable by the poet. Instead this singer, while basing herself upon experience common to all Catholics, feels herself under no obligation to say over again what we all know, and by her acceptance of it happily disposes of it. She is thus free to confine herself to such parts of her piety as are unique. We get this in *Juniper* and in *Saint Peter*, where, without any effort to reach originality, she obtains it.

I kneel to those old dogged feet
That padded on from shore to city,
I cry for that old troubled heart
That tried to tempt God out of pity.

How could he know except in tales
The majesty, the rune of law,
An old man bred to nets and sails
Betrayed by ignorance and awe.

Ah, dear to me! Ah, dear to me!
That fear, that flying from the rod,
That ancient infidelity
Rewarded by a risen God.

More often, however, she refrains from dealing even to this extent with the stock images of Christian belief.

I, made surer by sound,
Beg what seems more to me,
The faith of a willow in winter,
Or a blind hound nosing the knee.

All of which amounts to saying that I, for one, find in Eileen Duggan's work that quality without which all else is valueless: artistic integrity. She has, within her own limits, solved the problem grimly confronting every poet: the necessity of dealing with familiar matters (without which there can be no point of contact with an audience) and at the same time dealing with them in such a way as to make them fresh and therefore interesting. Obviously, unless the poet has some new thing to say, there is no excuse for his burdening the world with further utterance. This part of the problem is nowadays pretty generally understood. But it is generally only partially understood, with the result that mere oddity often takes the place of originality. The familiar is rigorously discarded, and the extravagant and the bizarre are raucously orchestrated by those who despair of ever recapturing felicity.

The truth of the matter is that every person born into this world is, to some extent (though I admit as a rule to a very slight extent) capable of originality. Every person has something unique in his make-up and therefore something unique to give. This is not to

affirm that that something is sufficiently significant to justify the pains that must attend its faithful presentation. Genius alone is capable of that burning and intense vision of the universe which the world of men need. But the minor degrees of originality are not without importance. They supply the supreme creator with encouragement, by assuring him of quick appreciation of what he can do, just as he, for his part, strikes ready fire out of their responsiveness. Moreover the minor degrees of originality are well worth exercising—in the form of reception, if not of creation—because they call, as do the greater, for a rigorous discipline in sincerity. And the elimination of an all-too-facile conventionality, which involves further a detestation of it, means good taste.

It will be seen that I reduce good taste to, as I also base creative genius upon, sincerity. The loathing of the cheap, the hackneyed, the second-rate—all that obnoxious conforming to the polite thing in emotional reaction—is not, nor can it be sterile censoriousness. Because, while it finds only disgust at the common attempt to reach beauty without discipline, and that unconvincing protestation of deep feeling, which sincerity is quick to detect as sham, all this is no more than the negative aspect of the passionate concern of good taste and good art with true feeling and brave thinking.

This digression has carried me, perhaps, too far away from my subject. Yet it bears upon all of Miss Duggan's work. I do not claim that this so far little-known New Zealand girl is a great creative genius. But I do find in her unmistakable artistic integrity expressed in a simple idiom that belongs to no one else. We have grace and charm here, and a delicate fancy; but I think that there is, as well, the operation of genuine imagination. Here is authentic vision, not a strong shaft of illuminating glory, but a light which nevertheless blesses all that it beams upon and provides, in its degree, a revelation of a world not seen under quite this form and in just these tender colors before.

"Beloved Son Of—"

Everyone knows that the road is brown,
That bittersweet follows the hillside trees—
Everyone shudders on All Souls' Eve
When shadows pass on a ghostly breeze,
Everyone knows that summer is done,
That tired leaves whisper and earthward fall
But there's one little sorrow that's safe and sweet
And nobody knows it at all.

Beyond the brown road and over the hill
The moon looks down from the kindly heaven
On a little lost head-stone under the leaves
Where sleeps a baby who would have been seven. . .
Lullabye—when the night wind sings,
Hush-a-bye when the soft rain falls,
And the miller's mad daughter on nights like this
Looks over the moor and calls and calls. . .

GRACIAN M. KELLEY.

A FRENCH SIEGFRIED

By GOUVERNEUR PAULDING

IN MAY, 1928, Jean Giraudoux, novelist and official of the French Foreign Office, produced *Siegfried* and proved himself at once a first-rate playwright. This play, a dramatization of Giraudoux's novel *Siegfried et le Limousin*, has now appeared in book form (Bernard Grasset, 12 francs) and from an international point of view suggests and requires some commentary. For not only is it such an excellent play that it may well turn a successful novelist into a dramatist permanently, but it is a play which must be read closely as a book, carefully as a poem and seriously because it deals intelligently with the serious matter of relations between France and Germany.

The play's theme has that simplicity of the nearly impossible which only treatment and poetry can make acceptable. In a military hospital during the war a wounded soldier is nursed back to life by a patriotic, competent and unusually political-minded German woman. He has, however, completely lost all memory of his origin, of his language, of his race, and these attributes of individuality are equally unknown to the lady who has saved him. He may be French; he may be German; he may be something else: no one knows. In the meantime he has to be taught again to speak and, in six months, he is taught to speak German. In that, one may consider him exceptionally fortunate. Together with the German language, the great abyss left empty by his loss of memory is filled with the cult of German history, German music and, very soon, with the hope of future German grandeur. His nurse—one is tempted to call her his political manager—profits by the amazing chaos of German post-war politics to "draft" *Siegfried*—as he has been named—into a position of political preëminence. On this assumption the play begins and moves swiftly and simply through four short acts. *Siegfried* is at the crucial point of his political effort toward the unification of Germany. This effort is logical and unsentimental. His mind is direct, mathematical, and it dominates invariably all he does. One may say that it possesses those qualities generally called Latin as distinguished from a vaguer and more intuitive genius of the North, and a political enemy proves one's assumption to be correct when he informs *Siegfried* that he is not German but French. *Siegfried*, at the height of his power, is left to choose between a country to which he is everything and a France to which he is no longer anything. At the little frontier station there is an exquisite passage: *Siegfried*: "Here is the train . . . let us go through the gate . . . Go first, Genevieve." *Genevieve*: "Not yet." *Siegfried*: "But it's the German signal that they're closing the doors of the carriages." *Genevieve*: "It's the French signal to hitch the white horse to the turntable. I have something to say."

Genevieve is the woman *Siegfried* loved when he was the Frenchman, Jacques Forestier, and what she has to say to him is the last word of the play and perhaps its point. She reminds him that never since she found him in Germany has she called him by his German name. Then, just as they go through the gate to the train, and before they cross the frontier: "Do you hear me, Jacques?" *Siegfried*: "Jacques is listening." *Genevieve*: "*Siegfried* . . ." *Siegfried*: "Why *Siegfried*?" *Genevieve*: "*Siegfried*, I love you."

Like all in this play the end is delicate and suggests rather than preaches. The fact remains that an intelligent and ardent Frenchwoman feels that her lover has been increased and not diminished by his stay in Germany; that there are certain

German qualities which, assimilated by a Frenchman, add to his value; and that it is possible to say so on a French stage. Not without some protest, but protest singularly ineffective, such as that of M. Doumic of the Academy which at once is annulled by a reply from Lucien Dubech, dramatic critic of the *Action Française*, writing, one hastens to add, in another paper. This play which speaks of Germany with illuminated sympathy and of France with quiet and restrained affection, definitely is not considered unpatriotic. The mentality of defeat after 1870 and that of harassed and costly victory—1918—has changed, or is changing, to one of confident stability—the classic attitude.

From the point of view of writing, the play presents a curious phenomenon. M. Giraudoux's prose style, like all innovations in so careful a science as French prose, has been much criticized for its constant and stimulating use of metaphor, and for its rhythm. It has been open to the charge of affectation. Now he has carried this style with no alteration into the theatre, and to a general surprise it has been found a perfect language for the theatre—swift, with no ends trailing, loose, vivid and poetic. One would have to quote much of the play to show its poetic quality: one may say that it must be great, for it lifts a controversial theme out of argument and melodrama, and has made the best play of recent years.

COMMUNICATIONS

THE NEW MINUTE MEN

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—I am glad to comply with your request for an expression of opinion in regard to the wave of intolerance which the present political campaign is stirring up. Frankly, I am appalled by what is happening. Perhaps because I am a Protestant with strong Protestant ties, my mail is crowded with leaflets and cards—many of them of a scurrilous nature and most of them anonymous—directed against the religious affiliations of Governor Smith and appealing to the lowest form of bigotry and passion. Moreover, many of the people with whom I talk—intelligent people who take seriously the responsibilities of citizenship—frankly admit that one of their reasons for voting for Mr. Hoover is that his opponent is a member of the Catholic Church. Generally, this admission is not stressed, but I get the impression that among thousands of citizens above the average in intelligence, the church affiliation of Governor Smith not only constitutes at least a partial reason for voting for Mr. Hoover, but has become a focus around which other objections to the Governor are centering.

Of course one of the inherent and ineradicable traits of the American voter is that he prefers to cast his ballot against something rather than for something. But it is intolerable that in this generation the hands of the clock should be put back and the religion of one of the candidates should become the target of attack. If Smith were a Baptist like Harding, or a Methodist like McKinley, not a word of criticism would be uttered. But because he is a Catholic, ancient prejudices from the moldy past are suddenly revived.

Do we learn nothing from experience? Here is an issue that after three hundred years of bloody warfare was finally given a decent burial by our forefathers. And now like ghouls we drag it from its grave. The generation that framed the constitution was wiser than we. It built this government on the basis of religious toleration and laid down the broad prin-

ciple that throughout the United States no religious test should ever be required as a qualification for public office. And here we are back again in the old days, using the same old arguments and playing with the same old ideas—as if Hamilton and Jefferson and Madison had never existed, as if the Virginia Bill of Rights had never been written, and as if paragraph 3 of article VI had never been added to the constitution.

What a pity it is that in 1928 voices should have to be raised to remind us that in every crisis of this country's history, our Catholic fellow-citizens have given a full measure of sacrifice and devotion! Catholics signed the Declaration of Independence; there were Catholics on Washington's staff; Catholic soldiers were at Valley Forge; there were Catholics in the Constitutional Convention of 1787. "Your fellow-citizens will not forget the patriotic part which you [Roman Catholics] took in the accomplishment of their Revolution," Washington wrote to Bishop Carroll. And as we come down the years of the last century we meet patriotic Catholics at every turn. There were soldiers, statesmen and scholars who contributed to the cultural and material life of America. Two chief justices of the U. S. Supreme Court were Catholics. There have been Catholic governors and Catholic senators and congressmen. In the last war Pershing's Assistant Chief of Staff was a Catholic; the commanding officer of the Second Army of the A. E. F. was a Catholic. The records show that in that great struggle 800,000 Catholic soldiers and sailors were in our military and naval forces, and 22,000 of them died in the service. How can we who have profited by the sacrifices of all these men now claim that there is something anti-American and unpatriotic about the Catholic Church which bars one of her distinguished communicants from occupying the Presidency!

There may be excellent legitimate reasons for voting for Mr. Hoover, but the church affiliation of his opponent is certainly not one of them. It is as irrelevant as the fact that Wilson was a Presbyterian, that Taft is a Unitarian and that Lincoln belonged to no church. These relationships are deeply personal matters. They are not the public's business and it is a dangerous impertinence that seeks to drag them into a political controversy. The sixteenth century with its folly and bigotry is dead. Let it stay dead!

RAYMOND B. FOSDICK,
Trustee, Rockefeller Foundation,
General Education Board.

WHAT SHALL WE THINK OF MEXICO?

(The Commonweal is glad to publish Mr. Gruening's letter, with Mr. Saunders's reply. We should like, however, to append a comment on one point. The charge that Protestant missionaries have been killed in Mexico is based upon two letters addressed to Bishop Creighton of the Episcopal Church. After having read them carefully we believe they demonstrate only the following facts: that the two men reported killed were not missionaries but simply parishioners; that government troops were active in the town at the time, attempting to padlock the Catholic church; that since Protestant worship was not forbidden, the natives concluded that an alliance existed between the troops and the Protestants; and that armed conflict was in progress at the time the letters were written.—The Editors.)

Portland, Me.

TO the Editor:—I have just seen the issue of The Commonweal for October 3, and Mr. William Flewellyn

Saunders's What Shall We Think of Mexico? In it he singles me out for specific attack both on the grounds of misstatement of facts, and because of attitudes which he alleges are mine. Kindly allow me to answer Mr. Saunders's allegations specifically.

Mr. Saunders says: "In his [Gruening's] last article. . . he revived that old story that Catholic bandits led by priests had attacked a train in Mexico. Says Mr. Gruening: 'Certainly the episcopate never, with one voice, has condemned the armed rebellion, under the banner of "Long Live Christ the King," in the course of which trains were assaulted, with priests acting as chaplains, and innocent victims, women and children, slaughtered.' That story was given to the Mexican newspapers and the foreign correspondents by the War Department of the City of Mexico, and was not true. I was in the City of Mexico at the time, and I talked to three passengers on the train which had been attacked by the bandits, who were after the gold carried in the express car. Each one of these three passengers told me that there were no priests with the bandits. The newspapers in the City of Mexico knew that this story was untrue, and although they had to print it under fear of banishment, both morning papers were smart enough to run the statement that this information came to them from the War Department."

Now I, too, was in Mexico City at the time. I likewise spoke with passengers on the train—three also—and in answer to my question whether priests had been present among the attackers they replied that it was night, pitch dark, and impossible to distinguish the assailants. (Two of the three, however, had heard the attackers' battle cry of "Viva, Cristo Rey!") That Mr. Saunders's passenger informants might have stated categorically that "there were no priests," I can well believe, but why he should cite their statements as conclusive proof he will have to explain. His passengers were endowed with better eyesight than mine. In substantiation I quote the New York Times' account of the episode (April 22, 1927): "The soldiers, unable in the darkness to see the enemy, fired at the flashes of the assailants' rifles."

Mr. Saunders's statement that "the newspapers in the City of Mexico knew that this story was untrue," etc., is similarly not in accord with the facts. No one in Mexico City the night of the government's communiqué, telegraphed from a point near Guadalajara, could possibly know, or not know, whether the story was correct. A week later, however, I spoke at length on that very point with the responsible editor of one of the Mexico City papers, who was personally hostile to the government and sympathetic with the rebels, and he assured me that the priests mentioned in General Carrillo's despatch were present during the train assault.

There was considerable other testimony as to the presence of priests. For instance there was that of a soldier captured, and taken in an automobile driven by a priest to the rebels' encampment, where he (the soldier) was later released. The priest (according to the soldier) declared that his followers were waging a religious war against the Calles government. The New York World correspondent, who was under no necessity of sending the story, cabled (April 21): "Several eyewitnesses, foreigners as well as Americans, confirmed the presidential charges that priests were involved in the massacre." Other American newspapers carried similar accounts from correspondents who certainly cannot be charged with friendliness to the Mexican government. Now such testimony, of which there is considerable, has only relative value, and certainly not enough in a controverted matter on which to charge categori-

cally the presence of priests. I did, however, talk subsequently with persons deeply in sympathy with the rebellion and hostile to the government, some from Jalisco, in intimate touch with the rebels there, who not only did not deny the presence of the priests in the train assault, but were proud of it.

But there is evidence even more conclusive. The government charged that priests led the assault. But the assertion that priests were serving in the capacity of chaplains—which Mr. Saunders declared to be untrue—was first made by the Mexican Roman Catholic episcopate. It may be found, *inter alia*, in a statement issued in San Antonio, Texas, on April 30, and published in the morning papers of May 1, 1927. The statement was signed by Archbishop Ruiz y Flores of Michoacan and was made in behalf not only of himself but of Archbishop Mora y del Rio and the other exiled prelates who had just reached San Antonio from Mexico City. That statement denied the episcopate's responsibility for the train assault, denied that priests had borne arms but replied that "priests had offered to be chaplains for the forces of national revolt." In the article in question I accepted the episcopate's version, not the government's.

Mr. Saunders says further: "In another part of this same article, he [Gruening] says: 'Incredible as it may seem to persons in the United States, Protestant missionaries have within the last three years, been set upon by mobs [in Mexico] and killed for no other reason than that of their faith and calling.' Now, if that had occurred, I should have heard of it. It is not true. Who were these Protestant missionaries, Mr. Gruening?"

They were, Mr. Saunders, Cruz Gomez and Celedonio Chitica, killed in the village of Tlajomulco, Jalisco, on May 7 and August 2, 1925, respectively. A detailed account of their deaths may be found in my *Mexico and Its Heritage*, just published, on page 282.

Mr. Saunders makes three other statements about me: That he "had never read a single article written by any of these gentlemen [a category in which he named me, 'the most conspicuous'] that showed that he knew or cared about the economic depression of the country." I regret that Mr. Saunders has not read a single article in which I discuss the economic condition of the country, but I am not responsible for his failure to read it. I refer him specifically to an article entitled *Calles's First Year*, published in the *Forum* in January, 1926. I refer him specifically to *Mexico and Its Heritage*, where I state (page 663) that the "Calles government . . . seemed destined to close as the Obregon government had . . . under the pall of a profound economic depression," and where I hold that government largely responsible therefor.

Mr. Saunders states that I am among those writers "who present the side of the Mexican government and sympathize with its policies." Well, having no reason to doubt Mr. Saunders's intellectual honesty and sincerity I challenge him to read my book from cover to cover—to peruse the chapters on the army, on labor, on politics, on foreign relations, and on education—and to tell me then whether he still believes I take anyone's "side." The trouble, I fear, with Mr. Saunders is that he views the Mexican situation in terms of partizanship (as indeed it is viewed by most Mexicans) and assumes that every commentator on Mexico must be aligned with one "side" or the other. I can only reply that my approach aims to be wholly objective. I believe that no one can read the result of my five-year study of Mexican affairs without giving me credit for having sincerely made that effort, however he may differ from any particular conclusions to which I have come.

Finally, Mr. Saunders declares that I am "straightforwardly hostile to the Catholic Church" and that I have a "plain animus against the Catholic Church." This is not only news to me, but will be news to anyone who has known me. The very opposite is the case, as anyone who has been associated with me in my journalistic work over the last seventeen years can testify. And here again I will attribute Mr. Saunders's mistaken view of my position to his same assumption of inevitable partizanship in Mexican matters. I found in Mexico many facts which reflected on various of its institutions and groups—army, politicians, government officials, clergy and others. I reported those facts as I found them, and from those facts I drew such conclusions as seemed to me to be warranted and just. If Mr. Saunders or any other individual will take the pains to read what I have written—not merely in the necessarily limited space of a magazine article but in a book in which I was not limited for space—he will find that assertions that may seem harsh are founded not on partizan testimony, which I took pains to eschew wherever possible, but on the best authorities available. My informants on the clergy in Mexico were chiefly the Mexican Roman Catholic episcopate, the Mexican Roman Catholic clergy, the Mexican Roman Catholic laity, and Catholics of other nationalities having special knowledge of Mexican conditions.

ERNEST GRUENING.

Port Chester, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—I have read with great interest Mr. Gruening's book on Mexico, as well as his letter to you, replying to my challenge of his statements that priests acted as chaplains to the bandits when they attacked the Guadalajara train in Mexico; and that two Protestant missionaries were murdered in Mexico by Catholics because of their religion.

Mexico and Its Heritage is an unusually good book. I borrowed it and read it, and now I am going to buy it. It should be in the library of everyone who is studying Mexico because it contains an enormous amount of information. Its bibliography shows that Mr. Gruening consulted nearly seven hundred books, magazines, documents and newspapers written in English and in Spanish during the five years of its preparation.

If Mr. Gruening thinks he is not a partizan he deceives himself. The inclination of his mind against the Catholic Church will be apparent to anyone who reads the book. Now and then he damns the Church with faint praise and he has a paragraph admitting that the Mexican government is oppressing the Church. But the reader who knows nothing about Mexico will receive the impression from his book that the Catholic Church has cast a blight over Mexico from the time of the appearance of the friars with Cortez. The history of the Church is painted in the most hideous colors and the good things it has done are not described.

For example, and this will be sufficient to show Mr. Gruening's unconscious animus, he has 115 pages on the Church and fifteen pages on education, and in those 130 pages he gives the Church no credit at all for the educational work it has done in Mexico among the natives. On the contrary, he begins his section on education by saying: "Popular education in Mexico was unknown before the revolution." And in the section on the Church he says: "With rare and honorable exceptions the Church was from the beginning interested in teaching the mass of the natives just enough to convert them to a superficial form of Catholicism and no more."

These statements are in opposition to the generally accepted

history of education in Mexico. In the time of the Spanish viceroys, elementary schools were scattered all over Mexico, in charge of priests, where reading, writing and arithmetic were taught to those who could accept that knowledge. Religion was taught in these schools, of course. Baron Alexander Von Humboldt, who visited Mexico in 1803, at the time when the influence of the Church was dominant in educational matters, wrote: "No city of the new continent, without even excepting those of the United States, can display such great and solid scientific establishments as the capital of Mexico."

Catholic priests established the University of Mexico, which had a much greater reputation for learning under their management than it has now. Up to the time of the expulsion of the Jesuits from Mexico in 1767, Mexico was progressing in education of the people and in all the arts and sciences. The decline of education in Mexico and the increase of illiteracy began then.

Just before the revolution, at the time when Mr. Gruening says that "popular education was unknown," Secretary Limontaur, President Diaz's Secretary of the Treasury, reported that there were 11,922 schools in Mexico, 20,432 teachers and 748,062 pupils. Of these schools, 2,170 were private schools, and of course most of these private schools were parochial schools, in charge of priests.

There are not that many schools in Mexico now.

Mr. Gruening is disingenuous in attempting to prove his charge that priests acted as chaplains for the bandits when they attacked the Guadalajara train, by referring to a statement of Archbishop Ruiz y Flores, of Michoacan. In this statement the Archbishop said that priests had offered to be chaplains for the forces of national revolt, but he does not admit that they were present at the assault on the train. Mr. Gruening's sentence is so worded that it would make the impression that the Archbishop had admitted this. The Mexican government moved heaven and earth to make the Mexican people believe that priests had led this brutal assault, but my investigation convinced me that it was not true. Had I been reporting the affair for a newspaper, I should have written: "The Mexican War Department tells the newspapers that three priests led the bandits, but passengers on the train tell me that while they saw the bandits climb into the express car and into the second-class car they saw no priests. The passengers on the train, to whom I talked, said that the burning car made it easy to see all the bandits and had there been priests they would have seen them."

For proof of his statement that Protestant missionaries were murdered in Mexico because they were Protestants, Mr. Gruening refers us to letters received by the Episcopal Bishop in Mexico, Reverend Frank W. Creighton. I have read these letters. They do not speak of "missionaries" at all. They tell of the killing of the two Mexicans named by Mr. Gruening, by other Mexicans. The two men killed were evidently Mexican converts to Protestantism. This is quite different from Mr. Gruening's statement, which creates the impression that foreign missionaries had been killed by Catholics because of their religion.

It is not to be wondered at that in the collisions in the interior between the soldiery and the Catholic people, when Catholics were being killed every day, feeling should have been aroused among the people against those of their own people who had joined the forces of the government. But they were not missionaries, and Mr. Gruening ought to retract his assertion to that effect.

WILLIAM FLEWELLYN SAUNDERS.

THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

The Light of Asia

IT IS literalism, I think, which robs the rather thin dramatic text of Georgina Jones Walton's play of any real illusion in Walter Hampden's elaborate production. Under any conditions, it would have been hard to bring this story of the life of Buddha to real vitality on the stage. There is plenty of material for drama in many of the scenes, but this material is allowed to lie inert. Nor do I mean by this that there is simply a lack of objective dramatic action. Struggle and conflict are the seeds of drama, and it is often quite as possible for subjective conflict to hold an audience enthralled as for a more dynamic outer action. To put it briefly, Buddha's great struggles—or what should be his struggles—are all pre-ordained victories. There is never the least illusion of doubt concerning the outcome; hence no suspense. That is what I mean by inert material.

But Walter Hampden has further handicapped the effect of the play by a literalism of interpretation which leaves no room for the highly important overtone of mysticism. He has done this by his own acting, which is obvious and rhetorical; by his failure, as director, to control his mediocre group of actors or to bring from them any unity of tempo or method; and by his lack of imagination in not endowing certain important scenes with a sense of spiritual grandeur. Whatever there is of suggestive or persuasive atmosphere comes from the settings of Claude Bragdon.

Let me take the "temptation scene" as a definite example of imaginative bankruptcy. After following the road of speculation, Siddartha has for several years subjected himself to the austere discipline of the ascetics. At the point of death from starvation, he discovers that truth lies in the middle path, rather than in fanatical extremes. His friends leave him. He is alone under his great tree, resolved never to leave this spot until he attains real illumination. A tempest arises. The subtle effects of Claude Bragdon's lighting arrangements begin to endow the scene with spiritual shadows and presences. For a moment you recall some of the great scenes in *The Dybbuk*, where supernatural presence made itself felt without being seen. Then an actor in black, with silvered horns, appears. It is our old friend, Mephisto, in oriental disguise. He proclaims who he is in loud and particular accents. Soon a horde of actors dressed as beasts and what-nots appear. When Buddha remains unmoved—as who would not—the lighting becomes much brighter to permit us to see in concrete detail a group of tempting maidens perform a dance staged by Ruth St. Denis. Some are graceful, others less so. For all that Buddha means in this scene, he might as well be off stage. Details of costume and movement fill the eye, and what is supposed to be going on in Buddha's soul becomes merely a spectacle on a stage before a Broadway audience. When the lights go down again, Buddha of course is triumphant. Ruth St. Denis's girls have been unable to tempt him. He has attained his great illumination. But by this time, it is Walter Hampden who has remained impervious, not Siddartha Buddha, and everything has happened near the corner of Broadway and Sixty-Second Street instead of in India in the sixth century B. C.! Spectacle without illusion. Colorful staging without imagination. Lights along Broadway—but not *The Light of Asia*!

Imagine the difference if the spirit of darkness had been merely a voice, a well-trained, weird and chanting voice; if the evil spirits had been mere shadows of light flitting about

in the heart of the storm, with here and there a dark shape rising from the earth only to vanish as the lightning itself. Imagine the dance of the maidens in semi-darkness, as such things might appear in the brain of man, with mere instants of scattered illumination, like a brief vision, seen only to be rejected; and over all the brooding spirit of Buddha, always the central figure, the symbol of suffering mankind searching for cosmic truth. Such staging—the kind Reinhardt might have provided—would have infused majesty—humility before the unknown—illusion in the truest sense. And, curiously enough, even Broadway audiences would have responded with some sense of awe and mystery.

A production such as Walter Hampden's is worth considering at this length precisely because it illustrates the cause of so many "artistic" failures in the theatre. The ordinary and hasty conclusion has it that plays such as *The Light of Asia* are too good for Broadway. The truth is, they are not good enough for Broadway. Broadway, in my experience, demands only two things. First, the essence of drama; that is, conflict, progressing from a definite beginning through a climax to an end. The conflict may be either mental or bodily, tragic or comic. But it must be conflict, and it must progress through well-marked stages. This much must be in the play itself, no matter what its subject, its time and place or its material. After this comes Broadway's second demand—illusion. It must be stirred, kicked, persuaded or bulldozed into believing that the stage happenings are real. Even if Broadway says to itself, mentally, "this is nonsense," it must say to itself, emotionally, "this is true." And nothing in the theatre is true art, no matter how pretentious or scholarly or elaborate or colorful it may be, unless it holds sway over the imagination of audiences, and makes them accept as true what they know to be mere representation. When art does not create illusion, it is no longer art but, as Arthur Machen has it, mere artifice. In Walter Hampden's present case, and aside from Bragdon's settings, it is even clumsy artifice.

Ingeborg Torrup, Mr. Hampden's new leading lady, is pictorially exquisite, but suffers the handicap of a noticeable foreign accent. Moreover, she was either poorly directed in her earlier scenes, or else lacks any depth of feeling which she is capable of expressing. Mr. Hampden once more gives the impression of being himself in costume. It is only when he characterizes definitely, both in mood and make-up, as in *Cyrano* or in *An Enemy of the People*, that he becomes in the true sense an actor. In other rôles, he is still too apt to appear as an expert elocutionist in costume. What he needs, and needs, and needs, is the help and check and stimulus of a director. We shall never know the best he can give until he is humble enough before his own art to stop directing his own plays and accept the discipline of an outside director. No good doctor treats his own family or his own ailments, even though he knows more and is more brilliant than the doctor he brings in. It is not a question of mere etiquette but of deep human psychology. What is true for the doctor is imperative for the actor. Has Mr. Hampden no friends well-wishing enough and honest enough and forceful enough to prevail upon him to face and accept this elemental truth? (At Hampden's Theatre.)

Mr. Moneypenny

SOMEWHERE beneath the superb weight of Robert Edmond Jones's settings, and Richard Boleslavsky's swift direction, and forty-five distinct program credits for everything from costumes and hosiery to busts, saxophones and typists'

chairs; somewhere beneath the gaudy ritual of expressionism lies a little ordinary grey mouse, and this mouse is called Channing Pollock's Verbal Cartoon, Mr. Moneypenny.

Theodore Roosevelt's alleged discovery of the Ten Commandments was a thrilling feat of mental exploration compared to Mr. Pollock's observations concerning the effects of money on the souls of men. If it is permissible to bear in mind more than one play by the same author, we can say that Mr. Pollock's shortcoming is chronic. He makes a habit of mistaking a symptom for a disease. That is what gives his perceptions the brilliancy of lead and his epigrams the weight of platitudes. In *The Enemy*, he proclaimed the cause of war to be hate, whereas it is perfectly evident that hate itself is merely a symptom of injured false pride. In *Mr. Moneypenny*, he does the same sort of reversed gymnastics, by accepting the fallacy that money is the root of evil and unhappiness. It seems quite to escape him (except for one moment near the end of the play) that the source of the evil may lie in one or many of our old acquaintances, the Seven Deadly Sins. Lust may desire money, as a means. So may pride and the power impulse. So may gluttony and envy, anger and sloth. Even covetousness itself may imply far more than the mere desire for money. One might covet the beauty of a neighbor's view, and then seek money to buy his house. These comments of my own are also platitudes. Of course! They have only one advantage over Mr. Pollock's. They are true. They are not sentimental and befogging platitudes, nor do they require such tedious explanations as that "happiness is a half-way station between too much and too little."

Mr. Moneypenny, you see, is a morality play done in the modern manner of staging. It reminds one of nothing so much as the attempts of some clergymen to jazz up their Sunday services by introducing musical novelties, oriental dances and straight-from-the-shoulder punches of oratory. Mr. Pollock thinks of the theatre as a sort of lay pulpit where he can earn the right to preach any kind of a sermon so long as he can dress it up with enough drama to pull a responsive and paying public. Bernard Shaw has the same idea. But it so happens that Mr. Shaw knows how to make his sermons entertaining and provocative, whereas Mr. Pollock does not. And if he should remind us that his views are much sounder than Mr. Shaw's, one would be inclined to say that the wrong reason for doing right is almost as harmful as the cleverest reason for doing wrong. Both are misleading, and it is worth remembering that most of Bernard Shaw's specious arguments spring from the ease with which he can attack just such muddle-minded and well-intentioned thinking as Mr. Pollock's. Before I forget it—Donald Meek does some exceptional acting in this play, and Jones's settings are really incomparably fine. And how Boleslavsky can manage crowds and movement! (At the Liberty Theatre.)

The Harpies

The verdure is gone, the fragrance is fled,
The crops are gathered, the stalks are dead,
There is only the beauty of ruin in their stead.

Earth now is fleshed as rigid as stone,
The rocks lie scattered like splintered bone,
Above cold hills the clouds are coldly blown.

And cold and casual, far on high,
The woman-breasted hydroplanes fly,
Bird-winged, steel-taloned, against a frozen sky.

ELIZABETH COATSWORTH.

BOOKS

Crusading against the Pagans

Catholicism and the Modern Mind, by Michael Williams.
New York: The Dial Press. \$3.50.

THERE is a stimulating and a refreshing quality about everything written by Michael Williams, because he writes from the heart as well as from the mind. He is both thoughtful and joyous. He writes with sincerity and with tremendous gusto. He has, as God's saints should have, a combination of earnestness and humor. He has an abounding zest for life; his mysticism is clairvoyant and healthy; he loves God and he loves his fellow men, though he naturally wishes they were all good Catholics.

I am not a Catholic, but I have derived so much profit from this book that I wish everyone might read it. It would reassure and strengthen Catholics in their faith, if any of them needed it; and it would show Protestants how true religious faith produces happiness, liveliness and peace of mind.

This book was assembled in a Trappist monastery in Kentucky—and incidentally the description of the daily and especially the nightly life carried on by the monks there is illuminating. The average outsider looks upon nuns and monks with bewilderment or pity or both; not even the worst Ku Kluxer, however, has shown such a total inability to understand them as was exhibited by H. G. Wells in his *Clissold* book. If a man of his alert journalistic intelligence can so completely miss the spirit of the monastic life, it is high time that asceticism should be sympathetically presented to non-Catholics.

The growth of Catholicism in the United States is a significant fact. When I was ten years old, I thought all Catholics and all Democrats were going to hell. Furthermore I did not suppose there were in the world any Catholics who were either well-bred or intelligent; I supposed they all belonged to the unskilled labor class. Well, at the time there were only three Catholic churches in my native town of New Haven; now there are thirty. Of course this growth is partly due to immigration; we have over 40,000 Italians in New Haven. But this does not by any means entirely account for such an advance. When we remember the position of Catholics in England at the time of Newman's conversion, and behold in these latter days men like Chesterton, Maurice Baring and others becoming Catholics, we have something to consider.

Bigotry, prejudice, narrow-mindedness in religion, have at any rate this good quality: the people who exhibit those unlovely traits are intense believers in their own form of religion. They are intolerant partly because they feel the supreme importance of their faith; just as a jealous woman, no matter how poisoned by this jaundice, would not be jealous if she were not in love. Her jealousy is an ugly proof of her love. Also, many people who are tolerant are tolerant because they are indifferent; they don't care. Much of the talk about religious tolerance in the present political campaign is hypocritical. Would these same people who shout for tolerance in the religion of Christianity be equally tolerant in the religion of nationalism?

Now I believe that it is possible to be terrifically in earnest and yet tolerant; I do not believe that conviction necessarily produces bigotry, or that tolerance necessarily means indifference. One of the many things I like about Mr. Williams is that, while he would cheerfully die for his faith as he now cheerfully lives for it, he has a real affection for and understanding of Protestants and of all sincere and high-minded men.

This book is called *Catholicism and the Modern Mind*. That is, Catholicism and the Modern Mind are antagonists, using Modern Mind in the sense in which it is used in this work. I am absolutely with Mr. Williams here, only I should call the fight a fight between Christianity and the Modern Mind. In this fight Catholics and Protestants are ardent allies, working for the success of the same cause. For, although it may make Mr. Williams wince to admit it, Christianity is greater than the Catholic Church, though I will admit that today the Catholic Church is the best drilled and equipped army.

So far from having retained a grain of my childish antagonism to Catholic ideas, I now feel myself identified with Catholics. When I see a Catholic Church edifice, I salute it—I belong in spirit. It seems to me that two things are needed today: first, the unity in spirit of all sincere Christians; second, their resolute antagonism to the forces of materialism, atheism and indifference. It is fatal for Catholics and Protestants to waste any ammunition on each other in the presence of a common foe.

A good Catholic lady once said to me: "You do not understand our religion." And I replied, "You must not say *our* religion. Your religion is my religion. We have exactly the same religion." And so we have. I love the Catholic Church with all my heart; the only shade of Protestantism in its original sense that I still possess is this—protest that the Catholic Church has not a monopoly of the Christian religion. But I wish with all my heart that members of Protestant churches all loved their religion as Catholics love it, and that they imitated the Catholics in giving it the first place in their lives.

Mr. Williams seems to feel that Catholics and the Catholic Church are being attacked in America. But surely he must see that the atheistical and materialistic essayists, novelists and dramatists are not attacking the Catholics; they are attacking the Protestants. It is the Protestant missionary, the Protestant pastor, the Protestant evangelist, who are bearing the whole brunt of satire and scorn. This is because these brave writers do not dare to attack the Catholics—the Catholics are organized and the Protestants are not. But lest any Catholic should take a secret pleasure in seeing Baptists and Methodists ridiculed by novelists and playwrights, let me suggest that these atheists may eventually become wary of smiting evangelicals, and that—being hunters of sensation and of the cash it brings—they may screw up sufficient courage to take the next step.

I rejoice that Mr. Williams sees plainly that the enemy of the Catholic Church is not Protestantism. This is the paragraph (page 119) that I like best in the whole book:

"Our great enemy is that medley of as yet unorganized, but intensely active and formidable, forces that may be grouped under the name of the New Paganism. Materialistic science, and the purely humanistic philosophies, social systems, arts and letters, which seek to derive their sanctions from materialistic science—these are the forces which are manifest in the myriad assaults being made today, from top to bottom of the social scale, against Christian ideas and ideals, Christian faith and practice, Christian morality and ethics, the family, marriage, the rights of the individual, liberty, personal property, and all the true interests of those whom Christ came into the world to aid more than all others—because more than all others they need God's help, through the Church which He founded for their help—the humble and the poor."

Mr. Williams speaks kindly of many enemies of religion, which is no more than Christian charity. But I am a little surprised to find him exhibiting any admiration for the works

of Aldous Huxley. If there is one writer today who is devoting all his talents to destroying both religion and morality, it is that cocksure young man. His cultivated English style is the veneer of putrefaction.

But, in recommending this book to both Catholics and Protestants, let me quote finally Mr. Williams's statement of the true end of religion, because it is precisely what I myself believe: "the chief end of religion—namely, that it is to bind man to God."

WILLIAM LYON PHELPS.

Sophistication and the Angels

The Children, by Edith Wharton. New York: D. Appleton and Company. \$2.50.

A NEW novel by Edith Wharton, on any subject and in any season, may be counted a distinguished episode for its craftsmanship—or better still, its artistry. But when, as in *The Children*, she turns this craftsmanship and artistry, with tenderness and irony, too, upon one of the essential problems of modern American life—a problem which, curiously enough, has had so slight a place in our fiction and in our drama—then it becomes an event of real importance.

We have here the story of a much-divorced, much-remarried American family floating loose around Europe. "The real wilderness is the world we live in," as Scopy, the long-suffering governess, confides to Boyne: "packing up our tents every few weeks for another move. And the marriages just like the tents—folded up and thrown away when you're done with them." That is the problem: treated lightly, humorously, satirically, as it touches the men and women concerned. They are just "modern savages," in Mrs. Wharton's summing up, who, having lost the savage instinct of fight, overwork the other instincts of sex and dancing and food and finery—pleasant, tawdry, irresponsible people for the most part, who cannot remember any emotion, good or bad, very long, and have sunk half unconsciously into their disintegrating "compromises and promiscuities."

But when the problem touches the children, it is a different matter. And the pathos is all the more piercing for the playfulness of this incongruous and noisy group: Judy, the oldest daughter of Joyce and Wheater, and their twins, Terry and Blanca—Zinnie, the child of Wheater and the film star after his first divorce—and the two melodramatic step-children who somehow followed upon Joyce's Italian experiment—finally, the remarriage and second honeymoon which was responsible for that exemplary infant known as Chip. It is more than a little complicated, especially as there are still other divorces and remarriages ahead; and no one sees them coming with a more uncanny instinct or precocious wisdom than the children themselves. That is why, just before meeting Boyne on a Mediterranean steamer, they have all sworn "on Scopy's book" never, never, never to be separated again! "If children don't look after each other, who's going to do it for them?" asks the experienced Judy. "You can't expect parents to, when they don't know how to look after themselves."

Martin Boyne is on his way back from a long engineering exile, coming to hunt up the woman—now a widow—whom he has loved as a wife. A delicate, unfulfilled romance is hinted here, and worked out to its tragic conclusion as the story goes on: and what deflects and in the end defeats it is Boyne's frank, inescapable preoccupation with the children. To be sure, the preoccupation is really with Judy, who is almost sixteen; as young as the youngest of them in book-

learning, as old as the world in her terrible, tolerant acumen and her passionate mothering of the brood whom Boyne perceives "so bared to the blast—as if they had missed some stage of hidden growth for which Palace hotels and Riviera expresses afforded no sufficient shelter." Not one of the grown-ups really wants them—although nearly all are ready to squabble over who shall not have them. So when the new matrimonial wreck looms, what can Judy do but kidnap the whole group, nurses and all, and follow Boyne to Switzerland? "Martin, darling, I don't believe I'd have dared if I hadn't known you'd see us through," she confesses, with a resounding kiss.

The fight for a home rages back and forth between Switzerland, the Lido, Paris. . . . It must have taken tremendous self-discipline on Mrs. Wharton's part to let that fight be lost in the end—just as life, the life she is dealing with, would let it be lost. One winces, too, at the death of the other romance which crosses the story, or is crossed by it, at right angles: the long romance of Rose Sellars and Boyne, doomed because they are human, not superhuman; not quite wise enough to cope with impossible, conflicting passions—the woman not wise enough to be silent in her emergency, nor the man to speak in his.

To readers who have grown unreasonably fond of these heterogeneous youngsters (and it is hard not to) the casual close of the book is scarcely less than heart-rending. Every thing they have fought for to make life dear and decent is gone; beneath the easy luxury of their scattered homes—their schools, their hotels—it is truly "the end of their hopes." Soon, even the hopes will be forgotten. It is just a little too ghastly to leave the beaten, wide-eyed Judith, smiling there on the dance floor. One wants Mrs. Wharton to give the book a sequel, to find some way out. . . . It is too ghastly to leave Judy to grow up like her mother—bound in sentimental shallows and opulent miseries!

But perhaps it is precisely what Edith Wharton wished; that when the gay, sad, sordid story was told, we should feel its ghastliness. "It's all too vile for belief," Mrs. Sellars had cried when told what Judy meant to do if her parents were divorced again. "Exactly," Boyne agreed, "and it's all true."

There isn't a mention of Catholicism in the whole book. It is all as secular and as "smart" as possible, and will doubtless prove the novel of the season. . . . But the story is, none the less, a hungry, harassed plea for at least one Catholic ideal, at least one Catholic sacrament. It is sophistication "on the side of the angels," with a vengeance!

KATHERINE BRÉGY.

Utopia Undernourished

Civilization; An Essay, by Clive Bell. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.50.

MR. BELL'S flippant introduction paves the way to a very serious book in which minor truths stand like sentinels about an impossible conception of life. The author is well aware that standardized production blights individualism, and dims the principle of beauty. He says bravely and truly that to prefer a liberal to a technical education is the sign and token of a highly civilized man. He is quite sure that better telephones, better transit and better sanitation cannot make New York as civilized as Paris; and there is a generous humility in his avowal that to France "the rest of Europe has always looked for some measure of fine thinking, delicate feeling and general amenity."

Such sentiments are all the more admirable because they run counter to the popular prejudices of our day. But when Mr. Bell defines his vision of a highly civilized life, it seems to us a trifle thin, and more than a trifle rotten. He finds in the history of the world only three perfect models of civilization: Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., Italy during the Renaissance, and France between the wars of the Fronde and the Revolution. Rome and England he blacklists, albeit Rome first gave to the world a life morally worth the living, and England gives it today (according to that keen observer, Santayana) "fair outward ways, finitude, and an aspiration toward freedom and quietness of spirit."

When, however, we read Mr. Bell's requirements for civilization, we understand why neither Rome nor England fills the bill. A perfectly civilized people, he says, must be idle, defenseless, and unshockable. That the world has grown too sad for idleness is a truth that should have forced its way long ago into his receptive mind. Nor is there a cure for this sadness save ignorance which is no longer possible to the intelligentzia of any land. If, at first sight, it would seem that such intelligentzia had grown as hard to shock as any reasonable man could desire, the essay points out to us our error. What Mr. Bell demands is a civilization which will accept with equanimity not only the natural vices which are part and parcel of an imperfect humanity; but the unnatural vices which the soul of man instinctively rejects, which have rotted every society and destroyed ever civilization into which they have been freely admitted. He acknowledges that these unnatural vices are repugnant to him. He has for them the same distaste that he has for cheese. But this is as far as reason permits him to go. It would be as intolerant for him to deny his fellow-creatures any kind of sexual intercourse as to deny them any kind of food. "We must learn to tolerate, not only other people's ideas, but their way of living also."

The third requisite for civilization, defenselessness, excludes, not England alone, but all the rest of us who cherish our national lives, and should like to cherish them a while longer. "The perfectly civilized," says Mr. Bell, "are essentially defenseless. . . . The moment they begin to defend themselves they lose their perfection."

Which makes us sigh for Isopel Berners.

AGNES REPPLIER.

A Gold Rush Heroine

Troupers of the Gold Coast, or The Rise of Lotta Crabtree, by Constance Rourke. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$3.50.

MISS ROURKE gives a glowing picture of the days of the Gold Rush in which the family of Lotta Crabtree was carried from a New York in 1848, "where men in high boots and sombreros seemed to spring from the sidewalks. New York harbor was full of every sort of craft; tiny sloops were being pressed into service for the voyage to Chagres, to Vera Cruz, or around the Horn. Young men from New England decked themselves for the journey in pale grey uniforms trimmed with gold and silver braid and lace, carried handsome sabres, and prepared to cross the plain in gayly painted wagons. . . .

"Nothing would do, but Crabtree must leave New York to dig gold in California. He never got any." This was the summary of Mary Anne, the mother of Lotta, in speaking of her improvident old bookseller of Nassau Street. He preceded his wife and family, was not at the wharf to meet them

when they reached San Francisco: "When they turned into Portsmouth Square the whole blazing life of the new city lay before them. Grey uniforms and gold lace might have been torn to tatters on the journey out, but the lads who had worn them could now assume sweeping sombreros and black velvet cloaks. Young Americans galloped through the crowd in all the old splendor of the native Californian, in serapes, glittering spurs, brilliantly decorated saddles. Red-shirted miners on foot slung their pistols with an air of grandeur. Gamblers proclaimed their calling by a cluster of feathers or a squirrel's tail in their hats, and by snowy white shirts with large diamond studs or massive gold breastpins." Children were still an uncommon sight in San Francisco. Lotta was gay with her bright black eyes and red hair. The city was full of actors; young Edwin A. Booth, who had played Hamlet for the first time a few nights before, might be seen riding down to rehearsal on a high white horse, hardly more than a boy, dark and pensive. The Crabtrees lacked even a shred of theatrical tradition, but no other player came to be so deeply rooted in the local scene, with so wide a later career.

The earliest performers counted among them Steve Massett, who sang and burlesqued his way throughout California. When a band of minstrels appeared in San Francisco in 1849, "one of the bones was killed in a brawl, and the unlucky troupe took refuge in the Sandwich Islands." The first complete theatrical performance in California took place in the Eagle Theatre in October, '49; when the heroine screamed out, "No! I'd rather take a basilisk and wrap his cold fangs around me than to be clapped in the embraces of an 'earthless robber,'" and the miners rose and threatened to wreck the theatre.

The Jenny Lind theatres, the Jenny Lind clipper ships and the persistent claims of old residents who remember that she sang in California, although history denies that the soprano ever traveled as far as the gold state, are other interesting phases of early life on the coast. There were also the Chapmans, a numerous family. Mrs. Judah, losing her husband and children in a wreck at sea, was rescued by a passing fisherboat. She lived to play a series of old women's parts, although she was still a youthful woman, and for thirty years she was a support to every important star, and overshadowed many of them. Kate Hayes, "the willowy swan of Erin," rivaled in concerts the fame of Elsa Biscaccianti, the first opera singer of note to appear on the coast; Catherine Sinclair; Lola Montez, "the Limerick countess, the Spanish dancer, born Eliza Gilbert in Ireland"; Julia Dean of the theatrical Drake family; Rowena Granice; "Tom Maguire, for years the magnate impresario of San Francisco; Adah Menken, converted to Judaism by her first husband and later allied with Heenan, the Benicia Boy, a popular prize-fighter"—were other luminaries.

It was to Boston and New York that Lotta owed her rise upon the legitimate stage. For years she had played, sung and danced upon the minor platforms and stages of the West, fostered by an indomitable mother, saved from the wrinkles and bruises of hard experience. Still very juvenile, she was bravely placarded at Niblo's as the "California Favorite," and her successes were reported vividly to her old rivals and associates on the Pacific coast. Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Louisville, Buffalo and Philadelphia became her regular circuit in Nan the Good-for-Nothing, The Pet of the Petticoats, Captain Charlotte, The Seven Sisters, Fanchon and Mabbie Astray. She was now in every sense a star, and John Brougham somewhat startled Mother Crabtree by publicly announcing Lotta as "the dramatic cocktail." It was Brougham who concocted the scenes from Dickens's *The Old Curiosity Shop* in which

Lotta made her great success in the double rôles of Little Nell and the Marchioness. In the midsummer of 1867 she crowded Wallack's Theatre in New York through a six-weeks' engagement. A friendly alliance with Augustin Daly resulted in his dramatization for her of Henry Ward Beecher's *Norwood*, and she also appeared in Daly's version of *Pickwick Papers*. In *Firefly*, an arrangement from Ouida's *Under Two Flags*, she successfully enacted the part of a vivandière, shocking the public with a familiarity with cigars, which she insisted she had gained from Lola Montez. In *The Little Detective*, she essayed six characters. She broke all sorts of stage traditions; wore her skirts above her ankles, played the banjo and created innumerable new steps in her dancing that are now American commonplaces. Character, inspiration, humor and originality marked her out as a great genius in comedy.

Miss Rourke is to be congratulated upon her fine work on early theatricals in the far West. She shows us how changed is the world we live in, after those old days when success on the stage depended so largely upon personality in the actor, when there was very little importance in the machinery and trappings beneath which dramatic art in America seems almost to have disappeared forever.

THOMAS WALSH.

The Struggle for Emancipation

The Ninth Lord Petre, or Pioneers of Roman Catholic Emancipation, by his Great-Great-Granddaughter, M. D. Petre. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$4.25.

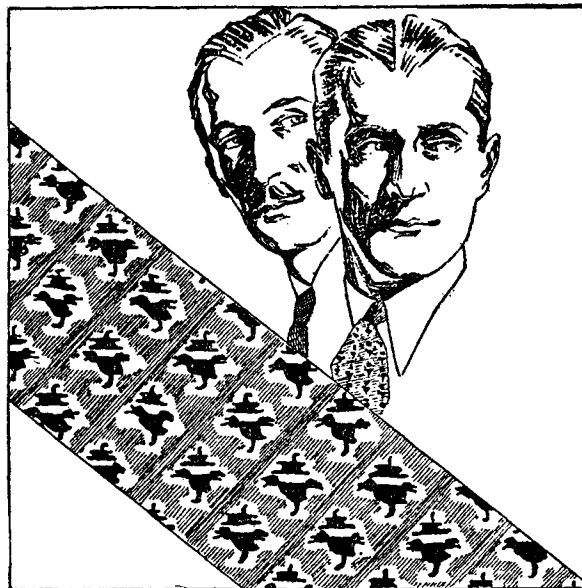
THE Petre family belongs to that little group of English Catholics who never raised the flag of surrender during the centuries of persecution between Henry's Act of Supremacy in the sixteenth century and the passage of the Catholic Emancipation Bill in the nineteenth. Year by year and reign by reign during this period, fresh acts of proscription were directed against the resolute faith of this devoted minority until the English statutes contained that most iniquitous of all codes, the Penal Laws. Deprived of all civil rights and subject to penalties and disabilities which debarred them from all offices of trust and emolument in the state, these Catholics were thrown back on themselves and forced into lives of separation and seclusion in which they developed a distinctive outlook and an unswerving loyalty and devotion to Catholic thought and practices.

The placidity of the Catholics and the complacency of the persecutors could not escape the revolutionary social and industrial upheavals of the last half of the eighteenth century. The Catholics commenced to petition for relief and redress. The active life of the subject of this memoir coincides with the first stage of the struggle for emancipation. With the passage of the First Relief Act in 1778 all the dormant hatred toward Catholics was aroused, and the timidity of the London magistrates in dealing with Gordon's followers threw the burden of restoring order on the king, whose curt order to the military put a sudden end to mob rule.

Half a century intervened between the passage of the First Relief Act and the Catholic Emancipation Measure in 1829. When the first Act was passed the Catholics were united. Dissensions soon arose and the struggle for further concessions became a three-cornered contest. The Catholic Committee was dissolved in 1792 and the divided sentiment of the Catholics found expression in the Cisalpine group on one hand and the Ultramontane group on the other. Agreement was impossible on the question as to how far the spiritual claims of

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religion should be taken as binding in matters of civil allegiance. Miss Petre makes no secret of the fact that her sympathies are with the side taken by her ancestor and she does not hesitate to insinuate that the prime mover in this lamentable split was Milner. It does not appear to what extent the progress of the Catholic cause was hindered by the controversy, but it put an end to united action in the cause of emancipation. Both the Cisalpine Club and the Roman Catholic Meeting ceased shortly to be effective agents in promoting the movement for further redress. The Cisalpine Club subsequently withdrew from political activity and was converted into a purely social assembly. It did not lie strictly within the scope of this book to record the interesting fact that when O'Connell went to London to claim his seat in the House of Commons, the English Catholics, as Ward says, heaped him with honors "in gratitude for having accomplished for them what they failed to gain for themselves," but the Cisalpine Club blackballed him when his name was proposed for membership.

Lord Petre was a staunch and loyal Catholic, but the real leader in the movement was Charles Butler. It is not surprising, therefore, that most of what Miss Petre has to say concerns the conflicts within the Catholic ranks. Butler is the hero of the story and Milner is just as decidedly the villain.

Some of the incidents told about Lord Petre throw a strange light on the position of Catholics in eighteenth-century England. Though he belonged to a proscribed race he occupied for more than thirty years the position of Grand Master of the English Freemasons. Pope Clement's bull condemning Freemasonry and excommunicating Catholics who belonged to it was not published in England and Catholics there did not consider themselves bound by its provisions. Also, during the French wars, the government gladly accepted Petre's offer to raise and equip at his own expense a corps of 250 soldiers, but refused his request that his son be commissioned in the company because the laws did not allow a Catholic to hold the rank of officer. Petre did not resent this churlishness and his son enlisted in the company as a private.

Miss Petre carries the story to her ancestor's death, in 1801. The problems confronting English Catholics were very similar to those which are up for settlement in Mexico now, and which are constantly raised when Catholics aspire to office in countries where there is a Protestant majority. Miss Petre's sympathies are Cisalpine, but while her account will not meet with universal approval, it is not likely to cause erroneous impressions regarding the merits of the case.

PATRICK J. HEALY.

Bolshevism: Father and Sons

Lenin, by Valeriu Marcu; translated by E. W. Dickes. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$5.00.

Red Russia after Ten Years, by George London; translated from the French by G. E. R. Gedy. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. \$2.00.

HERE are two books treating of almost the same subject, and yet how different they are! The first is certainly a volume which can rank among the warmest tributes ever rendered to the memory of a man whom his admirers call great, but whom sane people can only compare to those destructive beings whose names live in history because of the things which they threw into the abyss, and of the people whom they annihilated. Genghiz-Khan, Tamerlane, Robespierre in modern times—like them he changed the face of a great land; like them he gave his life to a useless effort, in the sense that it

brought only suffering, misery and death to an already enslaved country.

Having known Lenin personally, I can perhaps speak of this new biography of his with a certain knowledge of facts. He was undoubtedly a great figure, to use the words of Motley in reference to the Count of Egmont, but he lacked the attributes indispensable to a great man. His success lies in the fact that he appeared in an already disorganized world, in a disorganized society that had lost every possible kind of moral support, together with its convictions, and in a discouraged, hopelessly weary country. This book shows better than any other that I have read the close association which, during the last years of his life, existed between his own personal hopelessness and that which had seized hold of unfortunate, already half-destroyed Russia. His triumph would have been impossible if Russia had not been demoralized by four years of a war she had fought against most terrific odds.

And even at its best, this success of which his friends say they are so proud, was only built on the lack of resistance in the nation which he seized pitilessly, without consideration for its condition of despair and exhaustion. He was also for a short time blinded by the glare of victory, but, and this justice should be meted out to him, he was the first to say openly that the experiment he had tried had proved a failure. Leninism died before Lenin, as the book of Mr. Marcu shows, and perhaps it was this destruction of his dearest hopes, together with the consciousness that he had been beaten, that his ideas had failed to bring about the results he had expected, which constituted the Almighty's chastisement of Vladimir Ulianov's crimes.

The entire life of the father of Bolshevism had been influenced by one tragic occurrence, the execution of his elder brother for an attempt against the life of the czar. He had adored this brother, and to see him perish on the scaffold entirely turned his brain, and made of him not only an agitator but a political criminal. There were circumstances in the tragedy which ought to have convinced him of the folly of useless sacrifices. But young Ulianov, unhappily for himself and for Russia, too, lacked the faith which makes martyrs and possessed only the strength that arms in darkness the hand of a powerful assassin. As Mr. Marcu says, he was a man who dismissed from his analysis the ideas of right and wrong, forgetting that, in time, they are bound to stand out and avenge themselves on all those who have denied their existence.

The entire impression of Russian conditions, as they are exposed in this book, is false, and reposes on a complete misconception of Russian mentality as well as of Russian character. The author's Lenin is just as wrongly appreciated. He loses his way whenever he tries to present to his readers a fact, and begins to wander into dissertations that leave one confused and dismayed. It is hard to tell whether he is himself a Bolshevik or a communist, but I do know that he is an idealist without any tangible ideal.

The other volume dealing with the Russian situation is very different from the work of Mr. Marcu. A satire in some parts, a humorous description in others, it carries the ring of truth throughout. One feels at once that the author tells us only what he has really seen with his own eyes, and that he regards his subject as so overwhelmingly interesting that it would only be a pity to spoil it with exaggerations or diatribes. He is amusingly solemn in all his appreciations, and absolutely exquisite in certain of his judgments on the different people he has met, and the different spectacles he has witnessed, as for instance his visits to various factories, to the prison which



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IN THIS, her first novel, Mrs. Littleton has also introduced an unusual minor plot twining the two with excellent artistry. Writing, as she does, of a colorful nation and period of history, she takes full advantages of the opportunities afforded her to embellish her story with some of the outstanding historical characters of the times, such as Ignatius Loyola, Teresa of Avila, Ponce de Leon, Bishop Las Casas and others. Her ability enables her to create situations in which she can introduce a Moorish legend or an Indian fable with equal felicity. The numerous elements entering this novel are combined with such superb taste and sense of proportion that a few pleasant hours are in store for the reader.

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the Bolsheviks conduct on a principle of charity and indulgence, which, however, is confined to common crooks and murderers, but resolutely denied to political offenders or enemies of the Bolshevik régime.

There is a good deal of seriousness beneath all the banter, and Mr. London leaves us with the impression that he is not only a keen observer, but also an intelligent man, able to rise above prejudices to reach an independent judgment. He gives us some pathetic pages, such for instance, as his meeting with a former great lady in czarist days, now reduced to the condition of a charwoman in the house of a Bolshevik and accepting it with humorous dignity, and the sad impression produced by the sight of the toys of the murdered little son of Nicholas II. There are others which make us cry and laugh at the same time, like his half serious and half comic appreciation of the reconciliation of the Soviets with God, where he takes care to underline the fact that "naturally the first advances came from the Almighty!"

But the conclusion of his little volume is by far the best ever reached by an observer of the Russian revolution. Unfortunately it is but too true that what has been destroyed in Russia by the mad men who rule it today, is "the family, the home which gives a meaning to life, and the liberty which makes it worth while." A sad conclusion, but somehow I like it better than the one of Mr. Marcu, which in reality is no conclusion at all, because it consists in the canonization of things he does not know, and of a man he has not understood.

CATHERINE RADZIWIŁŁ

Drilling New Craftsmen

The American Renaissance, by R. L. Duffus. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.50.

THIS book is well described upon its jacket as "a comprehensive survey of the condition of art—its teaching and practice—in the American colleges and art schools." The author made a tour of "outstanding" institutions, bringing to bear upon them tastes acquired, one may imagine, in the classes of Charles Eliot Norton, the first awakener of aesthetic sensibilities in Harvard students. As a result, he finds himself "legitimately" asking whether these educational agencies are not preparing soil in which may spring up, on all sides, a renaissance of art, perhaps entitling us "to write the name of America beside the names of Italy and Greece."

He says little as to the artistic value of what these institutions do but gives abundant detail about their founding, purposes, hours and ways of work, even of discipline. Knowledge of architecture, sculpture, painting and craft-work of the world's best periods is being given out through the museum lecturers to students, young and old, who are encouraged by instructors in the local art schools to attempt solution of like problems. Music and drama also call to them, through enterprise of the community, to be "creative artists." And the response is certainly rewarding in enthusiasm and vitality. "Selling art" to the multitudes (though Mr. Duffus does not use that phrase) is leading multitudes to decorate material, greatly increasing all material sales thereby. Can these decorating multitudes be given standards of artistic excellence able to chasten their abundant product into such beauty as we find in decorations of the past?

Mr. Duffus cannot tell us. He is impressed, as anyone should be, by the eagerness of students and of teachers, as well as by the talent and ability they show. But he says: "The conception of the artist, the model upon which the apprentice

to the trade of beauty forms himself, is changing before our eyes. . . . Not so long ago tradition set the painter or sculptor apart from the rest of mortality. He was a priest, he understood mysteries, he communed with the stars. . . . [Now] he drops handicraft, hails the machine as his brother. This means an art that goes with the prevailing economic and technical drift. Just as the mediaeval artist served the Church the modern artist must serve the machines, which are by way of being the modern church. But what does one mean by machines? Primarily an enormous power of reduplication, and a corresponding loss of the individual touch. . . . The artist's opportunity is to make of the machine a mightier etching tool, a vaster brush, to spread his idea across a countryside, instead of confining it to a few feet of wall or canvas."

One feels suggestive questioning behind these sentences. But certainly machines cannot be both "the modern church" our artist is to serve, and "a vaster brush to spread ideas across a countryside"? It is in the latter capacity alone that machines might take part in an artistic renaissance. But they cannot spread ideas of power and beauty till such ideas shall be again conceived by men. And to conceive sublimely men must have some vision of an immaterial good which they can body forth with such devotion as artists of old time gave to their gods.

MARGARET KENDALL.

Villon Himself Again

François Villon, by D. B. Wyndham Lewis. New York: Coward-McCann, Incorporated. \$5.00.

THIS is biography at its best. It is well that the American public should be treated at last to an honest and scholarly portrait of Villon after the wealth of inaccurate, third-rate stuff produced on the subject in the form of glowing and wholesome legends, sentimental plays and other literary mouth-wash; the conception people have formed is that of an attractive and gallant gentleman, concealing a heart of gold under a somewhat rough exterior; in short, a potential Robin Hood endowed with the gift of words. Nothing, of course, could be farther from the truth, and very different is the tale which Mr. Wyndham Lewis tells. Here is Villon before us, alive, divested of glamour, his verse his only saving grace: Villon the villain, Villon of the sordid life, Villon the thief and the murderer, Villon the drunkard and the debauchee. No redeeming gestures, no chivalrous feats to relieve the picture; only a magnificent feeling for rhythm and an extraordinary gift for weaving words. A spent and ugly body, a mirthless, cynical and unscrupulous soul, but a soul that knew the beauty of sound, and could create it.

A splendid tale, splendidly written. It is as if Mr. Wyndham Lewis had fitted his language to the texture of the man and the period. And the vitality of it! The sentences bound and rebound with a buoyancy, a surety of aim that delight the eye and the ear.

There is more to be reaped from the book than a haunting, flesh-and-blood portrait of Villon, and a scholarly compilation of the best he wrote; Mr. Wyndham Lewis also re-creates before us, with much skill and beauty, the atmosphere of the fifteenth century. The amount of labor the book presupposes, be it said in closing, is stupendous: weeks and months of research, long and patient delving into a maze of involved and contradictory records. No effort has been spared, no stone left unturned, to get at the facts, find Villon as he really was.

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Serenity and Depth

Facing Life, by W. H. P. Faunce. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.00.

FACING LIFE is a collection of over fifty talks to students on the meaning of life. Though not so sustained, they remind us much of Professor William James's admirable Talks to Students on Life Ideals. President Faunce says these papers "are too brief to allow logical development—logic does not always prevail at nine a. m." There is logic enough and what is more, serenity, insight, charm, breadth of view and good sense.

These essays deal with The New Environment, The Widening Horizon, Deepening Faith, Persistent Problems and Beyond College Gates. Under these general titles a wide range of subjects are treated: Liberal or Vocational Training, Afraid of That Which Is High?, Good English, Before Examinations, The Social Message of Religion, Who Was Jesus?, Why the Bible?, What is America?, The Meaning of Change, An Industrial Creed.

The essays are brief, usually about four pages long. They are brief, but they are crisp, and incisive. They are like little intellectual cameos. They are crystals of thought.

The general educational point of view may be indicated by a paragraph: "The great reform in education would be to abolish 'preparatory schools,' and make school life a fine and worthy thing in itself, so that if the student never goes any further he has still had a rich and enlarging experience under large-minded, great-souled men and women. In a real school we are not getting ready to live—we are living. 'The best preparation for life is participation in life.'"

The more general point of view may be illustrated by: "Moreover, a great triumphant belief in some eternal principle, in some unchanging value, in something worth living for and worth dying for, releases us from scores of petty fears and inhibitions and makes us pass over obstacles as a flying eagle over stone walls in the pasture." Or more crisply: "What we think of God determines what we think of all else in the universe"; and from another angle—"Science has made chance unthinkable."

The book is extremely well written. Within our space limitations only two characteristics may be noted. The first is the effective use of a fine summarizing or anticipatory epigrammatic sentence. The two quotations at the end of the last paragraph illustrate it. Other illustrations are: "Nature's penalties are swift and sure, and the path of moral perversion leads straight to the door of the insane asylum." "Education divorced from purpose becomes self-indulgent dilettantism, self-centered, anemic and perilous to the nation." "There is something in the native American temper which compels the steady repression of the best." And finally, "Christ never dissolved religion into sociology or diluted His gospel into physical hygiene and sanitation. He kept His message fundamentally religious, heart-searching, God-seeking."

The other is the effective use of an image to drive home similarly the point he wishes to make: "Odysseus stuffed their ears [the sailors'] with cotton to shut out the tempting strains [of the sirens]. But when Orpheus and his crew sailed past the dangerous islands, he took out his lyre and struck up a sweeter music so that the sirens' voices were no longer heard. 'De te fabula docet'—'the story means you.' No stuffing of the ears can save us long. No withholding of the facts, no artificial deafness and blindness will we submit to!" Again, "The problems bristle before us, like the Sphinx which would

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devour those who could not guess her riddle." Was the cause against the lecture method ever put so well so briefly? "All intimacy, all personal contagion under such circumstances, is impossible, and the long-range lecture becomes a Big Bertha fired hit or miss at an unknown crowd."

This is an altogether admirable book, and though one might disagree with some points, one cannot help feeling the fine, serene, expansive personality who speaks through the pages.

EDWARD A. FITZPATRICK.

An Analytical Spree

Good-Bye Wisconsin, by Glenway Wescott. New York: Harper and Brothers.

THIS group of sketches is so like a companion-piece, in organization and material, to its author's success of a year ago, *The Grandmothers* (which was certainly only ostensibly a novel) that one does not immediately seize upon the difference which makes the present book a so much less satisfying expression of young Mr. Wescott's unquestionable talent. This difference does not lie in the fact that *Good-Bye Wisconsin* deals with contemporary interpretations—Mr. Wescott is a realist, which means one whose art should be under no special debt of richness or force to a vanished era; but it may well lie, if we permit the chance wording of the sentence to shape a suggestion for us, in the fact that *Good-Bye Wisconsin* does deal in interpretations. It does represent its author indulging himself in that protracted, humorless brooding on the significance of life, and that painstaking defining of the esoteric intimations of rare moments of being, which are the special temptation of all articulate and intelligent people. It may be added that they are also the special artistic enemy of this type of fluid sketch, which relies solely upon the concrete expression of a mood to impose form upon it.

Mr. Wescott has not the dramatic instinct which enables Mr. Hemingway to round out his literary moods so swiftly and flawlessly, nor the unity of mind and the indescribable magic of imagery which gave Katherine Mansfield's best work a sharply rememberable quality that experience itself does not possess. But in the separate vignettes which made up *The Grandmothers*, he did display abilities which must be regarded with deep respect. He showed that he could scent out and accumulate material rich in its own right, and that he possessed the instinct for dealing with it fully and simply, neither sweetening it, on the one hand, nor smartening it with touches of our extremely dated current sophistication, on the other. It was not over-laudatory to compare *The Grandmothers*, in its humanness and objectivity, to the work of Miss Cather, who first accustomed us to that combination in what may be called our regional literature.

In *Good-Bye Wisconsin*, the balance is no longer held so sure—not so much, one feels, because Mr. Wescott has forgotten how to be objective or how to "get on with the story," as because he evidently feels he has earned the right to slow up and think his thoughts out. And there is a result, other than the diminution of entertaining power, which is curious enough to be called paradoxical. Mr. Wescott's material is, of course, still authentic, and still recognizably chosen by the serious artist who is consciously aware of the use he intends to make of it. But his increased preoccupation with its significance actually makes it seem less significant. The moral reality of the characters, which was so evident in the specific and constantly advancing narrative of *The Grandmothers*, is here quite definitely diminished. They have ceased, to a large

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extent, flying the signals we all understand, and have become mere counters or symbols in the game Mr. Wescott is playing in his own lonely mind. Much of his material is intrinsically dramatic—A Guilty Woman, which plays a new variation, to a new conclusion, on the hackneyed theme of "a woman scorned"; Like a Lover, which deals with the dreadful fascination exerted by a murderous maniac on two different women; The Whistling Swan, telling of a young musician disappointed of his life's ambition, but strangely restored and bitterly consoled; The Runaways, Prohibition and The Sailor, which are the book's most explicit studies of Wisconsin countryside characters. But the genuine drama here has been so retarded, its meaning so translated and overlaid with elaborations and refinements of meaning, that what is forthright and memorable in it comes with no immediate impact, for the most part, but like an echo relayed from very far away. Perhaps the first sketch, from which the book is named, is the best, not only because the author's sensitive perceptions are at their acutest in dealing with that Mid-West which is to him partly an aversion and partly an obsession, but also because this one piece, Good-Bye Wisconsin, pretends to be no more than an essay. Hence it is freed from the necessity of establishing a dramatic focus. Its pace and purpose suit the author's new discursiveness so admirably that it is the sole example in the volume of genuine artistic unity.

MARY KOLARS.

The World's Blood-Pressure

Health and Wealth; A Survey of the Economics of World Health, by Louis I. Dublin. New York: Harper and Brothers.

DR. DUBLIN, the well-known statistician of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, has gathered an immense amount of valuable information with regard to most of the problems of health which occupy the people of our day, in a series of fifteen essays which constitute this book. Some titles that are tempting to those interested in such questions are: The Cost of Medical Service, What It Costs to Neglect Our Children, The Chance of Death from Cancer, The Problem of Old Age, The Possibility of Extending Human Life.

The two addresses of particular interest at the moment are: Birth Control and the Population Question, and Has Prohibition Improved the Public Health? With regard to birth control there are such striking sentences as: "Already in 1920 the native stock residing in the urban areas was scarcely reproducing itself. . . . The number of older persons in this population is constantly increasing. Many of these have to be supported by the younger generation. The greater the burden placed on young people, the fewer their children. . . ."

Dr. Dublin emphasizes the fact that contraceptive practices may do serious harm. There is the very strong possibility that they may result in permanent sterility of young married women. He adds, "I know nothing so tragic as the case of young people who avoid children in the first years of their married life, only to find that they cannot have them when they want them." He comments, "Probably the most serious single consequence of the current practice is that it robs those who indulge in it of the greatest of all blessings—the families to provide for and to live for."

Dr. Dublin's comments on prohibition and its effect on health are quite as striking and as well substantiated. The effect of prohibition on the general health seems to have been good. It has made for better conditions in the home, such as more and better food, better medical service and better

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housing. There has been a saving of 14,500 children a year under the age of five and another 2,000 a year between five and ten with still another 1,000 between ten and twenty. This improvement does not hold true for the health of mature men. Beginning with 1920 there has been a continuous and marked rise in the death rates from the use of alcohol. The records of the hospitals for the insane show similar increase of alcoholic insanity. What is even more interesting is the fact that the death rate from alcoholism has gone down during the last ten years in Canada.

These excerpts will make it very clear that Dr. Dublin has written a very interesting volume which contains valuable material on insistent problems.

JAMES J. WALSH.

An American Iliad

John Brown's Body, by Stephen Vincent Benét. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. \$2.50.

SUDDENLY, and with only the mild fanfarronade of a de luxe first edition, Stephen Benét leaps into the front rank of living poets. We had known him as a clever young novelist and clear-voiced lyric poet, capable of turning out a Saturday Evening Post story and a swinging ballad with the same versatile excellence. But in the first twenty pages of *John Brown's Body* we find that he can twang a mighty narrative string, and that in doing so he has set new epic vibrations echoing through that Valhalla where Roland, Beowulf and the Nibelungs used to lord it alone.

Mr. Benét has performed a remarkable feat: he has made a long poem exciting, hugely readable, popular. With the exception of Masefield, no other modern poet has achieved this distinction. Mr. Benét has had enough experience with popular taste to realize that his readers must know all about his story before he starts writing it; that the chief actors must be thrice familiar to everyone; and that the ground must have been trodden by the feet of a thousand previous story-tellers. These are the prerequisites of any epic and all forms of folk literature; in *John Brown's Body* they save many a dreary chapter and verse of explanation, many a prosy stretch of diagrammatics. The tale goes forward with grand omissions; the poet celebrates only the rich superlative instances: Pickett's charge at Gettysburg; the death utterance of Wirtz, villainous commandant of the Andersonville prison; the description of Grant's baggy uniform and Lee's immortal horse. Whenever possible, Mr. Benét deletes mere prose. As a result, *John Brown's Body* makes a useless campaign map, a wretched text-book, but a torrential poem of the Civil War.

The novelist's art supplements the poet's in the handling of various sub-plots woven throughout the tale. No one could ask for happier romantic material than the loves of Wingate, the southern officer, and Sally Dupré, daughter of a gambler; Jack Ellyat, the northern volunteer, and Melora Vilas, the copper-haired backwoods beauty. The sacrifice and passion of these lovers is briefly but powerfully indicated against a backdrop of moving armies and terrible realism. One is lost in admiration of Mr. Benét's narrative skill, marveling that he turns and advances so dexterously within the confines of a few running verses.

But ultimately it is the poetry in *John Brown's Body* that makes it swifter than any short story, more engrossing than any novel. No brief quotation can do justice to the elastic extension of the blank verse, solid with poetry, yet buoyant with "that blood that flies with the bird." The lyric passage

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*Rev. George Hodges, Dean,
The Episcopal Theological School,
Cambridge, Mass.*

I confess I began the examination of this work with many misgivings and some prejudice. But I soon detected evidences of sound scholarship, critical judgment and both fairness and frankness. I notice that every article is signed and

an adequate bibliography is attached. This speaks for its authoritativeness. I note that every creed and philosophic speculation from Animism and Fetichism to Christian Science and Pragmatism is treated. This speaks for its comprehensiveness and up-to-dateness. I note there is no attempt to manufacture facts or to twist them to fit theological theories. Where a disputed question is discussed, all sides are given with reason and authorities. This speaks for fairness.

As a Baptist, I was especially anxious to see what treatment we would receive. No denomination, unless it be the Catholics themselves, is so generally misunderstood and so often misrepresented. I found the article in question to be careful, clear, comprehensive, and in all essential details, accurate.

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HENRY MORTON ROBINSON.

Simple Annals

The Way It Was with Them, by Peadar O'Donnell. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.50.

THE English edition of this book is called *The Islanders*. That has geographical precision. But the present title fixes the latitude and longitude of the mood. This is a simple account of the way life goes with the people of one of those little rocky isles which break the rage of the Atlantic before it thunders on the shores of Ireland. Things which usually determine the quality of a novel do not count here. Folk on Inniscara fall in love, woo and suffer heartache and wed, but their way in such matters is as simple as their ways in fishing and farming, gossiping and merry-making. To give the book a bit of a plot, the author drags in a very improbable complication. It doesn't hurt the book much; it does not help at all. Ruth Wilson, from the great world beyond, never becomes real in this island world. All she accomplishes is a bad effect on Peadar O'Donnell's prose for a few chapters. The infatuation, between Susan and the refugee, Friel, has more probability, and to leave Susan safely in Charlie Doogan's arms at the end, the author has to make Friel jilt the girl without rhyme, reason or explanation.

But Peadar O'Donnell set out to write about love only in its due place with birth, death, labor, hope and despair, starvation and plenty, grief and merriment—I was about to say, all the human emotions, but no: there is no hatred here, nor cupidity, nor greed. Rage there is in one instance, with cause enough; but no ignoble purpose, no mean action. These people are a noble breed; these annals are tonic. Told with a stark simplicity many of these scenes must make a deep impression on any sensitive mind; moreover, the conviction of reality is absolute. Such incidents as the death and wake of little Nellie; Mary Doogan's collapse from starvation as she struggles to provide food for her brood; Mary's own death, with her thoughts on the eggs and the ducks and the hens—these are not only glimpses of a fascinating, strange society; they are saturated with primal emotion. The struggle with rocky soil and capricious sea is an epic, and the sweep of the salt winds is in the excitement following the discovery of the herring shoal. The old Faith is the quiet constant consolation of these people, and if the priest cannot get to the island often, the rosary is ever at hand. The islanders are not romanticized nor made "quaint" for sophisticates to smile at. Their speech is reported with obvious veracity, and its resemblances to and differences from the reports of Synge, Lady Gregory and others, is something to ponder.

This excellent book by a new Irish writer is made still more interesting by Robert Lynd's introduction and Beth Krebs Morris's admirably appropriate woodcuts.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

Is This Americanism?

The following are excerpts from anti-Catholic literature being circulated throughout the country in the guise of propaganda:

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"Catholics believe all Protestant marriages illegal, and hence Protes-

tant wives are not really married and their children are illegitimate."

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ROOSEVELT SAID: "Any political movement directed against any body of our fellow citizens because of their religious creed is a grave offense against American principles and American institutions."

BRYAN SAID: "Those who have come into intimate acquaintance with representative Catholics did not need to be informed that they do not concede to the Church authorities the right to direct their course in political matters, but many Protestants, lacking this knowledge which comes with personal acquaintance, have been misled."

Many sections of our country, particularly where there are few Catholics, are being flooded with millions upon millions of pieces of literature of the type quoted above. Augmented by radio, pulpit and rostrum, the growing momentum of these outbursts of intolerance has brought about a crisis, gravely endangering the unity, the peace, the prosperity of the Nation.

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Fouché, the Man Napoleon Feared, by Nils Forssell. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. \$4.00.

OUTSIDE of two half-hearted concessions to the present inane demand for romantic explanations of character in biography, Nils Forssell allows the facts to tell their own story of Fouché. But these concessions are fine, curious examples of the extremities to which a writer is sometimes reduced. Thus, Fouché's seafaring ancestry is offered as the source of his ability to steer a devious route through the confusion of political waters, maintaining "a sharp eye, a steady hand on the tiller and imperturbable calm in all weathers." And this is followed by an amusing argument which reconciles the contradictions between Fouché's radicalism and the training which he received in the Oratorian order. Even Fouché's reference, when in exile, to his academic years as "filled with feelings of sweet delight, of true spiritual uplifting" is used to support the case. "For we must bear in mind," says Mr. Forssell, "that about 1780 the standard of spirituality demanded by the Oratorian order was far less severe than that of an earlier period."

Once these things are off his mind, however, he recovers his bearings, takes a new grip on his purpose, and allows the story to proceed on its own. It is not his fault if the facts condemn Fouché: he has carefully avoided a thesis of any kind, when it would have been easy to adopt one of guilt. What extenuating circumstances existed are duly noted, together with Fouché's devotion to the principles of the Revolution, amid all his personal and party double-dealing and treachery, his freedom from private considerations and his loyalty to his family at all times. Altogether the book cannot be overlooked in the literature of the Revolution or of the Napoleonic era.

VINCENT ENGELS.

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